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ABSTRACT

The study looks at the role of immigrants in the workforce, status of English language learning in vocational and workforce education, and ways the system can enhance opportunity and productivity for limited-English-proficient adults. It begins by examining characteristics of the current immigrant workforce and future labor requirements. The second chapter discusses the current service delivery system for adult vocational and basic education, focusing on the problem of fragmentation, design of existing major programs, and the funding outlook. Chapter three reviews research and trends in this area over two decades. In chapter four, aspects of program design and planning are examined, including models for integrating language and vocational training, need analysis, development of support and resources, recruitment, multiculturalism, instructional component development, support services, staffing, and program evaluation. The fifth chapter outlines steps in setting up a workplace English-as-a-Second-Language program, presents four models for creating a partnership between an educational organization and workplace, features of the partnership arrangement, need analysis, approaches to curriculum development, and program evaluation. The final chapter lists ten steps for enhancing the state and local role in this aspect of labor force development. Contains 192 references. (MSE) (Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Literacy Education)

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Learning to Work in a New Land

A Review and Sourcebook for Vocational and Workplace ESL

Marilyn K. Gillespie

ED 406 857

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The Vocational Classroom: A Great Place to Learn English
by Elizabeth Platt
Using examples from actual vocational classrooms, this paper explores how vocational teachers, ESL teachers, and vocational program administrators can maximize opportunities for limited-English-proficient students to improve their English as they master vocational content.

Workplace ESL Instruction: Programs, Trends, and Issues
by Miriam Burt
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Learning to Work in a New Land:

A Review and Sourcebook for Vocational and Workplace ESL

by Marilyn K. Gillespie

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Marilyn Gillespie

Introduction

This study is an important work. For the first time, workplace ESL and vocational education are seen together as part of a continuum. They form a natural bridge, but are most often separated by funding source and delivery system. Here they are reviewed and linked together. The study is also important as it is a review of the adult education system for workplace and vocational ESL as that system has existed for the last 25 years.

In November of 1994, the composition of Congress changed, and the agenda and priorities of the 104th Congress seemed to reflect the growing mood of the country: anti-immigrant, anti-welfare, and to some extent, anti-adult education on the federal level. The bills introduced in Congress—H.R. 1617, the CAREERS Act, in the House of Representatives and S. 143, the Workforce Development Act in the Senate—would have consolidated federal adult education, vocational education, and job training programs into a system of block grants to the states. According to the legislation, the Secretaries of Labor and Education would both have had jurisdiction over the programs. The bills adopted and encouraged the idea of a one-stop "shopping center" for workforce development, with a network (or multiple accesses to core services) of comprehensive and fully integrated career centers. Such centers would have included outreach; intake; initial assessment; career counseling; workforce education, including ESL; referral to appropriate employment or vocational rehabilitation; and auxiliary services, such as child care and transportation.

These bills languished in limbo: They were never passed or vetoed. The Congress that begins session in 1997 (or the next) will certainly work on the reform of vocational and workforce ESL, and many of the ideas of the Goodling and Kassebaum bills will be resurrected. The ESL world needs to be ready for them.

This book takes a definitive look at where we have been in vocational and workforce education and where we need to go if we are to maintain and augment our work for limited English proficient adults.

Allene G. Grognet
Director, Project in Adult Immigrant Education (PAIE)

Chapter One

The Role of Immigrants in the Changing Workforce

In the past decade, two trends in federal policy have profoundly shaped the patterns of immigration and the role immigrants play in U.S. society (Fix & Zimmerman, 1993). On the one hand, the United States has developed the most inclusive immigration policy since the turn of the century. During the 1980s, one third of the nation's net population growth came from immigration. Since the passage of the Immigration Act of 1990, the numbers have increased even more. This reality has significant implications for the character of our workforce. Many of those who reach the country come at a prime working age, and since the number of working-age, native-born adults is declining, they will make up a larger and larger portion of the workforce of the future. By the year 2000, more than 29% of new entrants to the U.S. workforce will be immigrants (U.S. Department of Education, 1991).

On the other hand, a second trend, a hands-off, laissez-faire federal immigrantion policy, reflected by recent reductions in federal support for programs targeting immigrants and refugees, has meant that these new arrivals have had limited access to the kinds of vocational and workplace training they need to play a productive role in the changing workforce. The sheer numbers of immigrants and their increasing ethnic and linguistic diversity are having a profound effect on many state and local governments as they struggle to meet immigrants' needs for education, health, and human services. Although, in the long run, immigrants and refugees contribute much more than they take from the nation's economy, in the short run, the burgeoning numbers of newcomers have fueled a recent increase in anti-immigrant sentiments and suggestions of yet further cuts in services.

The first two chapters of this book provide detailed information to illuminate the facts behind these two complex trends and to illustrate why denying preparation to new immigrant workers, while cost effective in the short term, may limit the productivity and strength of the nation in the long term. This chapter discusses who the newcomers are, the resources they bring to the country, their educational and training needs, and the role they may be predicted to play in the workforce of the future. Chapter II explores in more detail how federal, state, and local governments, as well as the private sector, have responded (or in many cases failed to respond) to the language, vocational education, and workplace training needs of immigrant and refugee adults.

Who Are the New Immigrants?

In 1990, the U.S. Congress significantly altered the Immigration and Nationality Act, the basic immigration code of the United States. The Immigration Act of 1990 (P.L. 101-649) modified the process for legal immigration, creating a new preference system to distribute visas. Most visas (71%) were to be granted for family reunification of relatives of U.S. citizens and permanent resident aliens. A full 21% of the new visas were to go to those who possess special

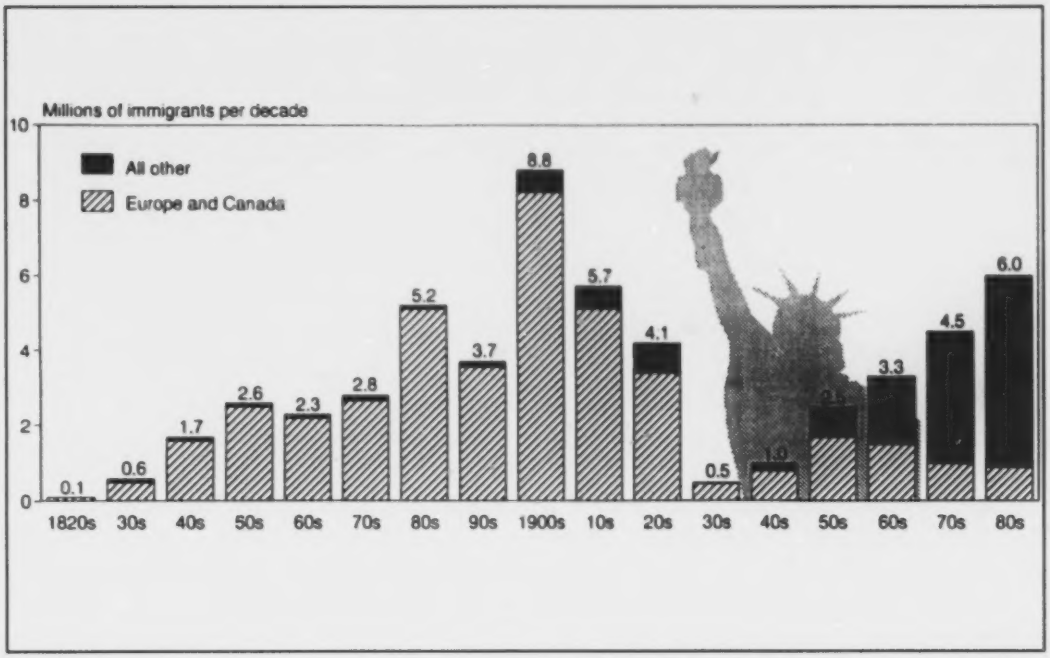

Figure 1-1 **Legal Immigration to the United States, 1820s to 1980s**

From U.S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment. (1993). *Adult Literacy and the New Technologies: Tools for a Lifetime*, p. 51. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

employment-related skills, advanced degrees, or professional experience useful in the United States. The remaining 8% were to go to what are called "diversity immigrants"—persons from countries awarded few visas in previous years. As a result of the new legislation, immigration, already generally on the increase since the 1960s, grew significantly (see Figure 1-1). By 1995, the number of visas for legal immigration rose to 675,000 (Morse, 1994, p. 13).

In addition to legal immigrants, two other categories of immigrants have also increased. "Humanitarian admissions" (primarily refugees and asylees) doubled in the period from 1985 to the early 1990s. And, although their numbers may not be as high as current anti-immigrant rhetoric implies, illegal entrants do make up a significant portion of those entering the United States. Adjusting for various factors related to border crossings and "commuters" across borders, the Urban Institute estimates that the net annual flow of unauthorized migrants intending to live permanently in the United States is roughly 200,000 (Morse, 1994, p. 18).

Settlement Patterns

The impact of this increase in immigration is magnified by the fact that recent immigrants have tended to settle in a few key states. In fact, according to one study, 80% of all immigrants (and 73% of all limited English proficient adults) reside in just six states—California, Texas, Florida, New York, New Jersey, and Illinois (Chisman, Wrigley, & Ewen, 1993). As can be seen in Figure 1-2, many states in the nation remain only marginally affected by immigration, with fewer than 100,000 people over the age of five speaking a language other than English at home. There are, however, several states, such as New Mexico and Hawaii, that

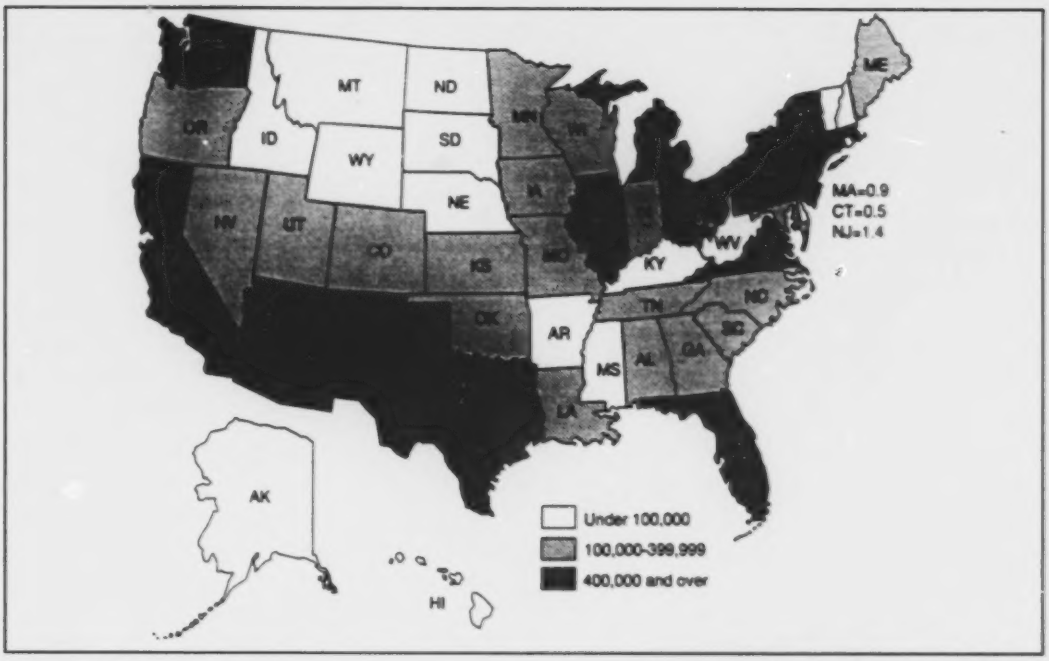

Figure 1-2 **Number of People, Ages 5 and Above, Speaking a Non-English Language at Home, by State, 1990**

From U.S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment. (1993). *Adult Literacy and the New Technologies: Tools for a Lifetime*, p. 53. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

have relatively high proportions of non-English speakers, even though the total numbers do not seem high because their overall populations are not large.

Of all the states, California has sustained the largest influx of immigrants. Today, more than 30% of all limited English proficient adults (3.6 million people) reside in California alone. They make up 17% of the state's population (Chisman, Wrigley, & Ewen, 1993, p. 8). Not only do more people immigrate directly to California, but a great deal of secondary migration from other states also brings newcomers to the West Coast. Moreover, this phenomenon is relatively recent. Half of all these refugees and immigrants have arrived since 1980. As a result, California, it is predicted, will soon become the first state in the continental United States with the majority of residents having a Third World ethnic heritage (Grognet, 1995). Overall, it is expected that the South and the West will not only experience the most overall growth in the next decade, but also the largest increases in immigration.

Even within these highly impacted states, the linguistic minority population is not evenly distributed. Figure 1-3 shows the ten U.S. cities with the highest percentage of adults who may need English language instruction. A majority (53%) of the adult population in Miami, for example, can be characterized as limited English proficient. Within the state, however, the vast majority of immigrants are concentrated in just three counties. In California, 49% of the population in Santa Ana in Orange County, 29% of the adult population in Los Angeles, and 12% of the residents of San Diego are limited English speaking. In Texas, limited English speakers are concentrated along the Mexican border and in cities such as El Paso

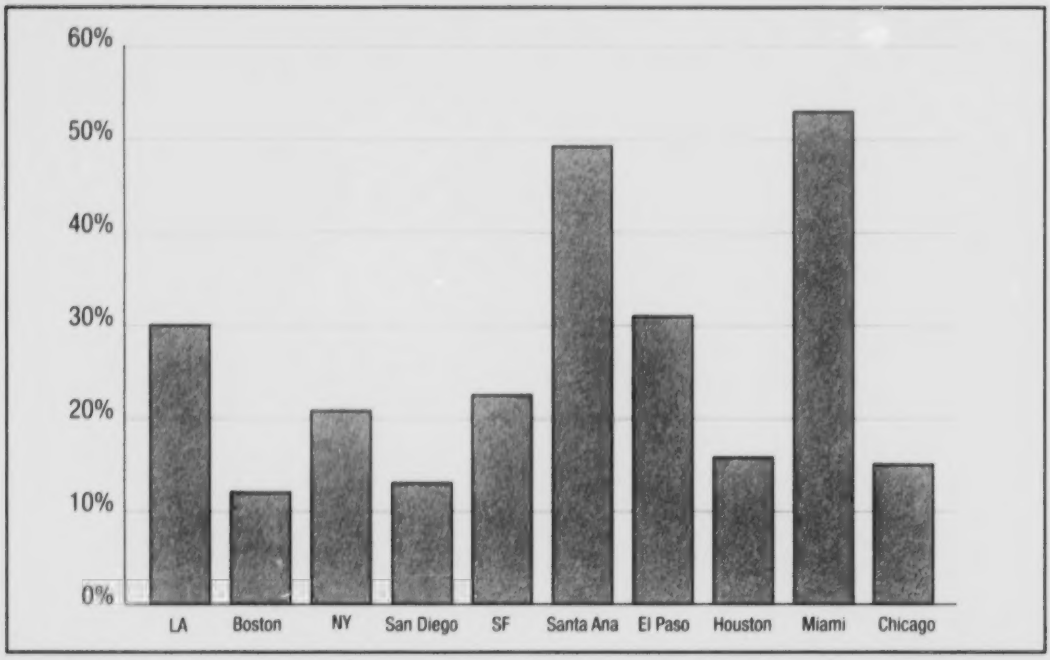

Figure 1-3 **Percent of Adult Population in Selected Cities Who May Need English Services**

Reprinted with permission from Chisman, F., Wrigley, H.S., & Ewen, D. (1993). *ESL and the American Dream*, p. 9. Washington, DC: Southport Institute for Policy Analysis.

and Houston. In New York City, where one in five residents is foreign born, it is not unusual to have more than 100 languages represented in a single school district (Chisman, Wrigley, & Ewen, 1993, p. 9).

Although major cities have been most affected, sometimes small towns and localities may also attract an influx of immigrants. In Lowell, Massachusetts, for example, the population of Cambodian refugees grew dramatically when members of the existing Cambodian community were able to raise funds to establish the first Buddhist temple on the East Coast in that city. The availability of this religious community caused a large secondary migration to the area. Lowell now is home to more than 20,000 Cambodians, representing about 20% of the city's population (Morse, 1994, p. 49). In Wausau, Wisconsin, with a population of 37,500, citizens initially decided to sponsor a group of Southeast Asian (Hmong) refugees in the late 1970s. With secondary migration and existing refugees acting as sponsors for others, Wausau has now found that more than a quarter of its elementary school enrollment is made up of immigrants. The new influx has increased the diversity of the small town, but has also strained its financial infrastructure (Beck, 1994).

Ethnic and Linguistic Representation

The numbers and locations of the immigrant population have changed, as have its ethnic and linguistic composition. The European influx of the turn of the century has given way to a new group of newcomers who are primarily Latin American or Asian, but who also represent

a wide diversity of ethnic and language backgrounds. The 1990 census found that 31.8 million Americans (14% of the total American population) speak a language other than English at home. Of these, 17 million (54%) speak Spanish. This represents an increase of over 6 million since 1980. Spanish is the prevailing non-English language spoken in 39 states, among both those born in and outside the United States (Macías, 1994). Vietnamese, Korean, and Chinese language populations have more than doubled over the last decade. Many others speak French, German, or Italian at home. The ethnic and linguistic makeup of immigrant and refugee populations can change dramatically, based on political realities. In 1991, for example, the largest and fastest growing group of legal immigrants came from countries that were formerly part of the Soviet Union (Chisman, Wrigley, & Ewen, 1993).

Although there is a fairly accurate sense of how many people speak a language other than English at home, estimating the number of those who are also proficient in English is much more difficult. Most surveys, including the 1990 census, are based on self-reported responses. When asked by the census how well they spoke English, about 75% of those who speak a language other than English in their home responded that they speak English well or very well. The remaining 25%, a total of 5.8 million adults, reported that they speak English not well or not at all (see Figure 1-4). These data, however, may be inaccurate, since many people may overstate their language abilities and since the census questions do not tell about people's skills in reading or writing English. In their study of the issue, the Southport Institute concluded that there are probably 12 to 14 million adults in the United States whose native language is not English and who have serious difficulties speaking, understanding, reading, or writing the English language (Chisman, Wrigley, & Ewen, 1993, p. 4).[1] They estimate that 76% of these are immigrants, while the remaining 24% were born in the United States and grew up in what the census calls "linguistically isolated households" and communities or were born here but spent much of their lives in other countries or in Puerto Rico. An earlier study, conducted by Development Associates, projected the figure to be 11.6 million by 1990 and to reach 17.4 million by the year 2000 (Fleischman & Willette, 1988).

Educational Background

The education levels of immigrant adults tend to represent a bipolar distribution. On one end is a large group of immigrants with advanced education and on the other is another cluster of adults with very limited education. About one quarter of foreign-born adults in the United States have an associate, bachelor's, or some other advanced degree. Many brought these credentials with them. A large number are doctors, engineers, mathematicians, and skilled tradespeople. Many others were entrepreneurs in their home countries. According to the Office of Technology Assessment, available data on the amount of schooling immigrants have received in their native countries reveal some interesting trends.

A higher proportion of these immigrants have attended college (38%) than have people born here (32%). But a greater proportion of these immigrants are also

[1] The term most commonly used within the field to refer to persons who have difficulties with the English language is *limited English proficient* (or LEP). This term commonly refers to individuals whose first language is a language other than English and who have sufficient difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language to deny them the opportunity to learn successfully in classrooms where the language of instruction is English or to participate fully in our society. Although many within the field are unhappy with the fact that this term tends to focus attention on the deficiencies of non-native speakers, it continues to be used in specific ways in much existing legislation and research. Unfortunately, no alternative has yet been agreed upon.

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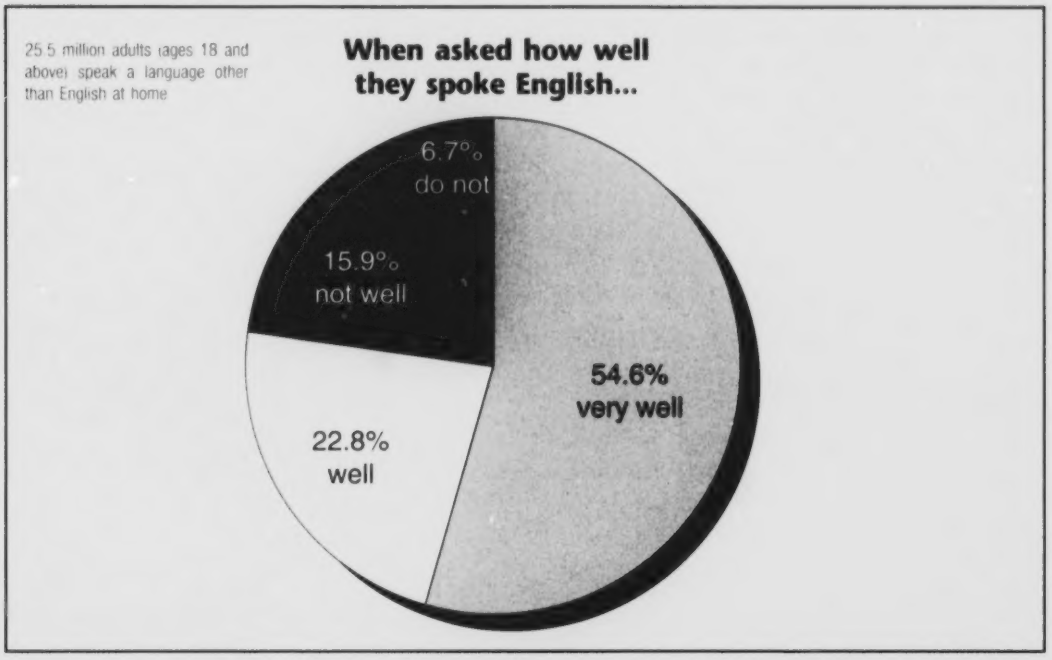
25.5 million adults (ages 18 and above) speak a language other than English at home
When asked how well they spoke English...
6.7% do not
15.9% not well
22.8% well
54.6% very well

Figure 1-4 Self-Reported Ability to Speak English in Non-English Speaking Homes: 1990 Census
From U.S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment. (1993). *Adult Literacy and the New Technologies: Tools for a Lifetime*, p. 52. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

found at the lowest education levels (31% have less than 9 years of schooling compared with 17% of U.S.-born). In contrast to this bimodal distribution for these immigrants, the largest proportion of the U.S. population clusters toward the middle of the distribution at the high school completion level. (U.S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment, 1993, pp. 50-51)

In the case of refugees, many of those in the earlier immigration wave of the late 1970s and early 1980s represented more educated professionals and military personnel. Those who came later were often from rural villages and lacked, in many cases, even basic literacy skills. In addition, as Hemphill and his colleagues point out, it takes many refugees as long as 6 to 8 years to make their way from their countries of origin to the United States (Center for Literacy Studies, 1992). Countless refugees have faced conditions of extreme adversity and violence as part of their migration experience, and they have frequently been forced to interrupt any education or professional experience they might have begun previously.

Unfortunately, many people who do arrive in the United States at a young age and begin their schooling in this country fail to overcome that most basic hurdle—high school completion. One study (Steinberg, Blinde, & Chan, 1984) found that students from homes where a language other than English is spoken are four times more likely to drop out of school than are students from English-dominant homes and had, at that time, an actual drop-out rate of 40%. The statistics for Hispanic populations are especially troubling. In the last two decades, drop-out rates overall have decreased slightly, and considerable progress

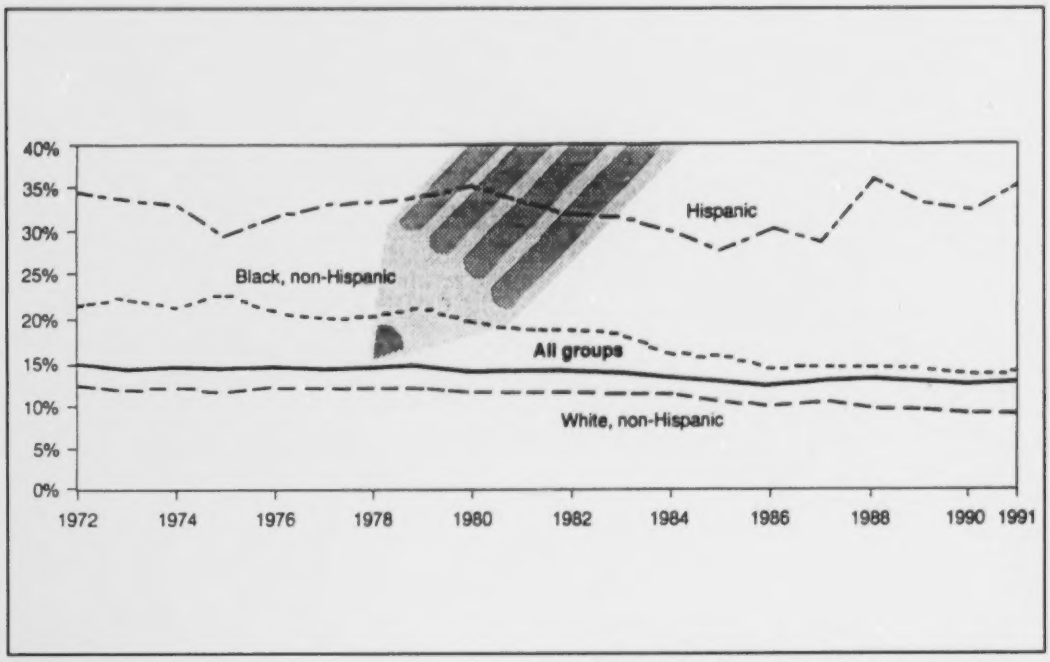

Figure 1-5 **Dropout Rates for Persons Ages 16 to 24, 1972-91**

From U.S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment. (1993). *Adult Literacy and the New Technologies: Tools for a Lifetime*, p. 52. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

has been made in decreasing the number of African-American dropouts. However, the drop-out rate for Hispanics has remained high. In 1991, more than 35% of all Hispanic persons aged 16 to 24 dropped out of school, as compared to about 15% for all groups (see Figure 1-5).

Given the precarious economic situation of the most recent immigrants and refugees, many among this group may drop out of school early in order to go to work to help support their families. But this does not completely explain the alarmingly high drop-out rate, particularly among Hispanics. Clearly, more information is needed about how the culture of school supports or fails to support linguistic minority students in their educational and career goals.

Literacy Rates

Another topic of growing concern relates to how to obtain a better picture of the literacy levels of limited English proficient adults. Getting accurate data on the actual literacy rates of this population is perhaps even more difficult than estimating language proficiency. To date, no widescale surveys using direct measures (such as tests) have been conducted both in English and in the native languages of linguistic minority adults. Most surveys in the United States have tended to equate literacy with *English* literacy. This reality often not only inflates the perception of the literacy crisis, but also stigmatizes those who are literate in languages other than English. The widely reported National Adult Literacy Survey (Kirsch, Jungeblut, Jenkins, & Kolstad, 1993) found that 25% of adults who scored at the lowest level on their English literacy test

were immigrants. These data may be somewhat misleading, however, since immigrants may have scored lower on the test due to limited English proficiency. To date, only the 1979 National Chicano Survey has measured biliteracy. Secondary data analysis of this survey indicated an overall self-reported literacy rate of 74% (52% English literate, 42% Spanish literate, and 22% biliterate). Interestingly, if only the English literacy rate had been reported, it would have appeared that 48% of the population was illiterate. If literacy abilities in *any* language are taken into account, however, the illiteracy rate falls to 26% (Wiley, 1994).

As Wiley (1994) points out, attempts to estimate the national level of literacy are fraught with many problems, both theoretical and logistical. There is considerable debate over how literacy should be defined. As a result, the development of operational definitions necessary for the design of research studies remains problematic. While for many years researchers tended to set up a rigid boundary between someone who is "literate" and someone who is "illiterate," today researchers argue that literacy cannot be treated as an autonomous or singular construct, but must be looked at in terms of what people do with literacy in the social context of their everyday lives. Moreover, studies frequently undercount language minority groups due to sampling biases and blur the lines between language, race, and ethnicity. For example, the term "Hispanic" is often used as a racial or ethnic designation as well as a linguistic one. As will be seen later, the development of survey information to determine the literacy levels of those who are limited English proficient has increasingly been cited by advocates of programs for immigrant adults as a vital step in the process to design better educational programs.

Economic Status

Like the newcomers of yesterday, today's immigrants come to the United States with a dream of prosperity. Many, over time and often by working long hours, do pull ahead and are able to buy their own homes, start businesses, or move ahead in careers. But the path to economic security is often a long and arduous one. For those who never learn English, the consequences are severe. Indications are that, without further training, many immigrants may never make it beyond the poverty level. Limited English proficient adults, according to a 1988 study (Fleischman & Willette, 1988), are more than twice as likely to live in poverty than non-limited English proficient adults. In addition to English fluency, other key factors related to economic success are the educational level attained in the home country, the length of time in the United States, and the size of the immigrant household (with those in multifamily households able to pool their financial resources to move ahead economically). Given the income figures shown in Figure 1-6, it is easy to see the importance of combining multiple incomes to ensure family survival.

A November 1989 population survey conducted by the U.S. Department of Labor reveals some of the most current information available concerning the relationship of employment rates and wages for immigrants to several key factors, including level of schooling completed, length of time in the United States, and fluency in English (Meisenheimer, 1992). Contrary to current public opinion, the survey showed a high level of labor force participation among immigrants. Among men under age 55, there was little difference between immigrants and U.S. natives in the labor force participation rate, nor was there much variation in labor force participation among immigrants by the number of years they had lived in the United States. The num-

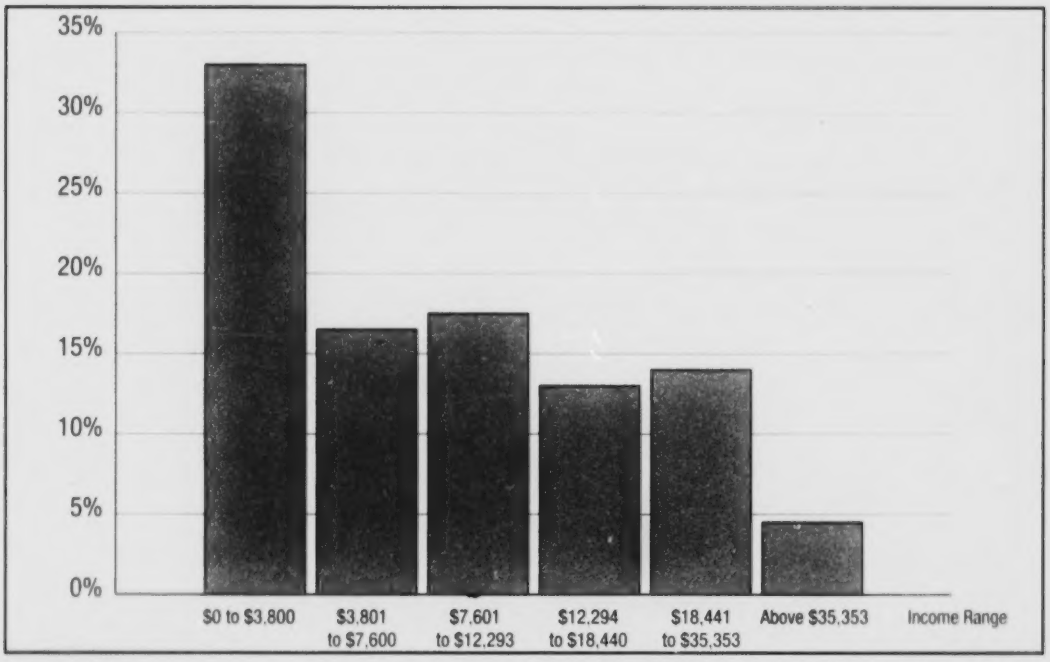

Figure 1-6 **Income Distribution for Limited English Proficient Adults**

Reprinted with permission from Chisman, F., Wrigley, H.S., & Ewen, D. (1993) *ESL and the American Dream*, p. 7. Washington, DC: Southport Institute for Policy Analysis

ber of men who were either working or actively looking for work was 97% for those having lived in the United States for 3 to 8 years and 95% for those having lived here for 8 to 17 years. (The notable exception was immigrant men who had lived in this country for fewer than 3 years. These men were less likely to participate in the labor force than were immigrants who had lived in the country for longer periods.) Immigrant women, particularly those of childbearing age, were also somewhat less likely to participate in the labor force than native women.

For most population groups, the study noted, labor force participation rates rise with the level of education. This suggests that the investment of more time and money in schooling heightens people's realization of expanded job opportunities and higher earnings. However, it was found that immigrants participate in the labor force regardless of their level of educational attainment. In fact, many immigrants prefer to take even the most menial entry level job rather than remain unemployed.

Entry level jobs are often the only ones immigrants are able to find. Among the population studied by the Bureau of Labor, 19% of recent immigrants—versus 9% of U.S. natives—worked in service occupations, including such jobs as food preparation, child care, and janitorial service. One fourth of recent immigrants, compared with one fifth of natives, worked as operators, fabricators, and laborers. Farming, forestry, and fishing occupations accounted for 9% of employment among recent immigrants, but for only 4% among natives. U.S. natives were more concentrated in higher-paying jobs

than were immigrants who arrived here during the 1982-1989 period (Meisenheimer, 1992).

The survey also looked at the relationship between English fluency and labor force participation through self-reported responses regarding language ability. Twenty-four percent of immigrants surveyed who were age 16 and older spoke only English at home. Another 45% spoke a language other than English at least some of the time and spoke English "very well" or "well." The remaining 32% spoke English "not well" or "not at all." Hispanic immigrants, the study found, were much less likely than non-Hispanic black, white, and Asian immigrants to be fluent in English. This may in part be due, the study postulates, to the fact that many non-Hispanic immigrants came from countries in which English is the primary language, such as the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Jamaica or from countries such as India and the Philippines where English is not the primary language but is commonly spoken, particularly among educated people. Hispanic immigrants, by contrast, largely came from countries where English is not spoken. Hispanics have also, on the whole, been in the country less time. In addition, in urban areas, large groups of Spanish speakers have created neighborhoods where there may be little need to speak English. With a working-age population of about 6 million, Hispanics represent the largest immigrant group. Spanish is the national language of virtually all Hispanic immigrants (as opposed to Asian populations where there is considerable language diversity). Furthermore, many of the 7.2 million working-age Hispanics born in the United States also speak Spanish. Finally, the fact that there are so many Spanish speakers in the United States may enable Hispanic immigrants to create labor markets that are somewhat independent of the larger labor market where English is spoken. Thus, for Hispanic immigrants who live in these areas, English fluency may be less vital for labor market success than it is for Asian and black immigrants or for Hispanics living outside these ethnic enclaves.

With respect to the relationship between English fluency and earnings, the Bureau of Labor study confirmed the findings of earlier research. Among immigrant men who spoke a language other than English at home at least some of the time, those who were not fluent in English earned only about half as much as those who were. The earnings differential between fluent and nonfluent women, although not so large as the gap among men, was also substantial. Education may also have been a factor, since nearly a quarter of 25- to 54-year-old immigrant men and women had completed fewer than 9 years of schooi, compared to only 4% of native men and 3% of native women.

Requirements of the Future U.S. Workforce

In recent years, a great deal of attention has been given to the fact that the pool of Americans who will enter the workforce in the next decade is ill equipped for the jobs that currently exist and for those jobs that will be available in the future. Europe and Japan, who have embraced new models of diversity and flexibility in production and invested more in human capital and education than has the United States, have increasingly moved ahead of the United States in many areas such as the production of chemicals, steel and primary metals, electronic machinery, and transportation equipment. In addition, economists point out, manufacturing jobs themselves are declining while service jobs are increasing dramatically as the country moves out of the manufacturing and into the information age.

Retail service jobs are the fastest growing category, along with business services such as computer-related occupations (Carnevale, 1991).

One of the key reasons for the country's economic problems, according to the U.S. Congress Office of Technology Assessment (1990) and the Business Council for Effective Literacy (1991), is that too many U.S. employers still embrace strategies geared to the mass production system that was once so successful, but that no longer responds to current economic realities. In the old system, work was broken down into the simplest possible tasks. Most workers required little training and were, therefore, easy to replace. Rather than as assets to be developed to add value, most front line workers were looked at in terms of costs to be reduced. A small number of white collar and technical elites at the top of organizations exercised considerable decision making power; if training was provided by organizations, it was at this level rather than for those who performed the relatively narrow tasks at the bottom.

Many new forces, according to Carnevale, now shape the economy. There is increased wealth overall and, since people can afford more, they buy more (although this often requires multiple incomes in a family). The marketplace has now become globalized; countries increasingly compete for international customers. People are demanding diversified products and services, and, since they are working more hours, more convenient, time-saving services. Low cost is no longer the only factor as busy consumers look for quality, customized products, and good customer service in addition to a good price. All of this has led to a demand for new, flexible technologies geared toward smaller, individualized markets and timely responses to changing needs and away from mass production. New technology has helped make this possible: software that can be modified quickly and at little added cost has allowed for more variety. Faxes, satellites, the World Wide Web, and other communication technology have aided globalization (Carnevale, 1991).

All of these changes imply a demand for new kinds of workplace relationships. In some large organizations, the pyramid shape of the work structure is flattening. According to the Business Council for Effective Literacy (1991, p. 7), the "work teams, operating at the point of production, service delivery, and customer interface, are being empowered with more direct responsibility for quality control and production decisions. The new role of managers is to provide organizational integration and to monitor outcomes." These new internal networks, in turn, are becoming linked to other organizations that are suppliers, customers, regulators, and financial backers, each of whom is dependent on the other for economic success. Increasingly, the cooperative flow of information back and forth between various networks has become paramount to success. Although these changes are taking place very slowly—with entrenched attitudes and habits dying hard—there is a general agreement on the overall direction of the change and of the danger to the United States role in global competition if it fails to keep up.

One of the key areas where the United States is failing to keep pace with other countries is in worker education and training. In the new economy, "learning will be the factor that determines earnings" (Business Council for Effective Literacy, 1991, p. 8). The fastest growth will be in large organizations and, to function within these, higher standards will be needed, even for entry-level jobs. Hard work alone will not be enough to advance beyond the entry

level. People with the most access to learning on the job will do the best. Often, education beyond the high school level will be needed for new workers. At the same time, however, the number of entry-level workers from traditionally better educated labor pools is declining; women, minorities, and immigrants will make up increasingly larger proportions of new workers.

Different skills are needed in this new workplace. Those on the front line who are dealing with suppliers, making the product, delivering the service, and interacting with customers will need to become part of what is often now termed learning organizations. Workers will have to juggle multiple tasks, solve problems as they come up, and supply creative solutions they encounter on a daily basis, rather than simply to perform repetitive tasks. Many will need strong interpersonal skills both to get along with customers and to participate in planning with co-workers. To move ahead, workers will need leadership skills to organize teams of workers. They will also need to be adaptable since they are likely to change jobs frequently during their working lives. Instead of reducing the skills required of workers, technology, for the most part, is increasing the need for basic reading, writing, and math skills.

Other skills are increasingly being identified by task forces such as the Secretary's [of Labor] Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) (U.S. Department of Labor, 1991). The members of this task force identified six categories of skills needed by workers:

1. Reading, writing, and computation;
2. Learning to learn;
3. Communication (speaking and listening);
4. Adaptability (problem-solving and creative thinking);
5. Developmental skills (self-esteem, goal setting, motivation, and career development); and
6. Group effectiveness (interpersonal skills, negotiation, and leadership skills).
   (BCEL, 1991, p. 8)

While each of these skills is important, it is emphasized, new ways must be found to teach them. Traditional academic classrooms that continue to break information down into small component pieces and use teacher-centered approaches are not effective in getting across the kinds of information and interdisciplinary processes most needed for the new workplace.

Although economic necessity may well force governments and employers to invest in education in the future, currently American companies are just beginning to increase funds for workforce education. Carnevale (1991) estimates that only 15,000—or one half of one percent—of employer institutions provide any formal workplace training. Of that, most goes to college graduates rather than to entry-level workers. The irony, he says, is that research shows training *does* pay by increasing productivity. European and Asian companies, who invest considerably more in learning at work, have already learned that lesson. According to many, the nation will either develop a high-wage, high-skill workforce, or it will not be able to increase productivity and will lose its ability to compete (National Center on Education and the Economy, 1990).

The Implications for Immigrants

What are the implications of these changing realities for those new workers who are immigrants? One thing is certain, whatever changes do take place, immigrants will play a growing role. Currently newcomers from other countries make up 8% (14.9 million) of the nation's workforce. Perhaps more importantly, by the year 2000, they will constitute a full 29% of *new* entrants to the workforce (U.S. Department of Education, 1991). Many of the new entrants will be immigrants who tend to arrive in their twenties, at prime working age. In contrast, by the year 2000, the number of young, native-born workers aged 16 to 24 will decline by about 8%, while the average age of the workforce will increase from 36 to 39. (Johnston & Packer, 1987).

While the recent backlash against immigrants has spawned the notion that they take jobs away from native workers and tend to lower wages, economists show this is not the case. According to a report by the National Conference of State Legislatures (Morse, 1994), recent reviews of fiscal studies on immigration have found that, overall, the consequences of immigrant labor on the earnings and employment of American workers are "weak or insignificant." In fact, immigrants will increasingly be needed to fuel the growth of the economy.

Yet in the current economy, the old "sink or swim" approach to immigrant employment—where immigrants receive little or no language education or job training—will no longer prepare these workers for the kinds of jobs available. For one thing, routine factory assembly and labor jobs, jobs most often associated with immigrants at the turn of the century, are disappearing and, even among those manufacturing jobs that do exist, the demand for more skills is increasing. Moreover, hard work alone can no longer guarantee upward mobility. The days when an immigrant starting out on the sewing room floor could, through drive and ambition alone, end up owning his own factory may well be a thing of the past. Today that kind of mobility often requires a large investment in specialized education. With the growing number of jobs dependent on strong communication and interpersonal skills, the ability to speak, read, write, and understand English and to interact within the American culture will be, in the future, the key to unlocking upward mobility for immigrants. Without it, even those immigrants who arrive with strong educational backgrounds in desirable fields such as engineering, health care, or computer science may continue to languish in entry-level jobs that do not take advantage of their educational background and previous experience. And without further education and training, that one third of all immigrants who possess less than a ninth-grade education will fall even further behind.

Perhaps the greatest tragedy associated with limited language and job training opportunities for immigrants is not the lack of employment so much as the chronic underemployment of those whose skills, if tapped, could contribute much more to the U.S. economy and culture as a whole. This is especially true in those cities and states most populated by immigrants, for, as Chisman and his colleagues point out:

> The large urban areas in which this population is concentrated are among our major engines for economic growth and our major social, political, and cultural centers. It is impossible to imagine a prosperous and civil America without a prosperous and civil Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, Houston, and Miami (Chisman, Wrigley, & Ewen, 1993, p. 11).

Americans in the late 1990s face a challenge not unlike one encountered at the turn of this century. Then, just as now, anxiety about the economic and cultural future has manifested itself in growing anti-immigrant sentiments. Immigrants, it was feared then, threatened the cultural and moral fiber of American society. Public discourse associated with immigration today focuses more directly on economics: Immigrants drain money from the nation's already stressed health care system, fill up the prisons and the educational system, and take jobs needed by native-born Americans. Such an image, however, may not be founded on reality. Although, as will be discussed in the next chapter, states and local systems may share an unfair burden, on a federal scale, immigrants contribute much more financially than they cost. According to the Urban Institute, the foreign-born pay $25 to $30 billion a year *more* than they consume (Topolinicki, 1995, p. 130). Just as in the early 1900s, the vitality, industriousness, and entrepreneurial spirit of America's newcomers have the potential to strengthen the economy and culture in significant ways. But for this to happen, language, vocational, and workplace education for adult immigrants must improve.

Chapter II

The Service Delivery System

Overcoming Fragmentation: Increasing Federal and State Concerns

Currently, the field is at a critical juncture in the delivery of adult basic education (ABE) and vocational services. Among many policy makers across the country, there is a call for reduced federal bureaucracy and a shift in decision making from the federal to state and local levels. Concerns regarding how to reduce the federal deficit and at the same time make government more responsive to local constituents predominate national political dialogue. The demand for change comes at a crucial time for many federal education programs targeting adult and vocational education. Two of the most important federal acts, the Adult Education Act (AEA) and the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology (Perkins) Act, were scheduled for reauthorization in 1995. As mentioned in the introduction, various proposals for change have been set forth, and although funds were finally appropriated, the acts were not reauthorized. The next years hold both challenge and promise as new directions will be established.

The existing fragmentation of adult education and vocational education services has been well documented in recent years. In 1993, the Congressional Office of Technology Assessment, after an extensive study, reported to Congress that "providers of adult education services are diverse and do not form a comprehensive system for addressing the needs of the nation. Students seeking adult education assistance are confronted with a web of disconnected, often overlapping programs" (U.S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment, 1993, p. 93). A widely reported Government Accounting Office study found as many as 125 different federal programs training adults and out-of-school youth, under the supervision of 14 federal departments or agencies (Morse, 1994). A 1992 COSMOS Corporation study of federal funding sources and services for adult education identified 27 programs in which adult education service delivery is explicitly stated as a priority objective in the program's authorizing legislation (Alamprese & Sivilli, 1992). On a state level, this maze of federal, state, and local programs makes it difficult for any but the most seasoned adult education professional to understand the conditions of existing services. Figure 2-1 illustrates the complexity of funding sources just within the state of Massachusetts. Within that state, the National Commission for Employment Policy found 31 training programs funded at $320 million in FY1992. Thirteen were funded by the federal government, nine by the state, and six were funded jointly by federal and state government (Morse, 1994, p. 41).

Some efforts have been made to correct this problem. Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) programs and Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) programs, for example, have been urged to coordinate services with each other. In addition, many states—like New Jersey, which administers 63 different basic skills and literacy programs—have begun to create their

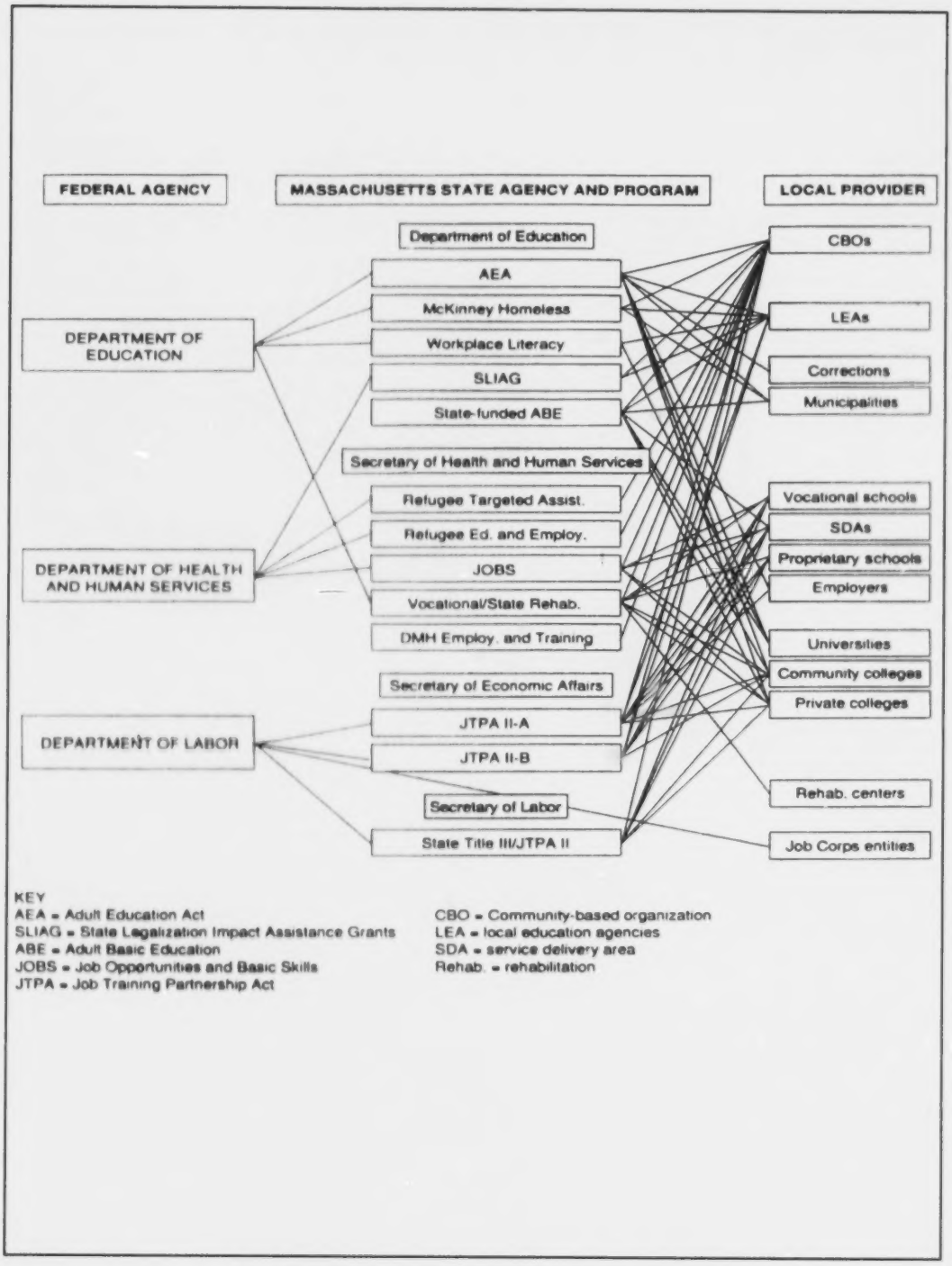

Figure 2-1 **Programs, Agencies, and Funding Streams: The Massachusetts Example**

From U.S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment (1993). *Adult Literacy and the New Technologies: Tools for a Lifetime*, p. 138. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

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own state-level coalitions to coordinate services. This task is not easy, however, because of conflicting eligibility requirements among programs. A lack of uniform terms and definitions for key populations such as the "economically disadvantaged" frustrates meaningful coordination (U.S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment, 1993, p. 96). Within adult English as a second language (ESL) programs, for example, there is no mandated or generally agreed upon course or curricular sequence as there is in the K-12 system, and no thrust toward national standards or reform as there is in other arenas of education. Often there is no requirement to conduct evaluations and no recognized system for accountability, although efforts are being made in this direction. Most funds for adult education are concentrated in the provision of direct educational services. Support for important areas that might contribute to the building of an infrastructure within the field are limited indeed. The COSMOS study, mentioned earlier, found that "while other activities—such as research, dissemination, and staff training—have been funded, they represented only about 4% of the monies accounted for in FY1989. Support for these areas is critical to the improvement of the overall system for adult education" (Alamprese & Sivilli, 1992, p. viii).

Clearly, it has become widely recognized that significant improvements are needed in the field. Morse (1994, p. 42) describes the situation as follows:

> Is diversity an advantage or a problem? On the one hand, the many programs enrich the field with a multiplicity of resources, approaches, and techniques. On the other hand, this potentially rich resource is squandered without a system that makes it possible to share what works and avoid what does not, that fills in the gaps and avoids duplication. The complicated web of services makes it difficult for policymakers to see the whole picture, define problems, and identify pressure points where long-term change can be instituted.

Given these realities, it is not surprising that estimating a total amount of funding is complicated. Most programs receive support from a variety of public and private sources. In addition, many federal programs authorizing multiple activities do not require that obligations or expenditures for adult or vocational education activities be reported separately (and even with programs that do report separately on adult and vocational education, most do not identify which of their clients are limited English proficient). There also exist no aggregate figures on the amount spent by business and industry on basic skills and ESL. What *is* known is that, in spite of the large numbers of programs, the actual dollars spent are surprisingly low, particularly at the federal level. Overall, although spending for adult and vocational education has increased significantly in recent years, the total amount is still meager in comparison with other major federal education expenditures (Figure 2-2). Funding is a continuous concern. Unstable and short-term funding make it difficult to develop a solid educational program, to purchase needed equipment or materials, or to develop and provide for a professional staff.

The Growing State and Local Burden for Immigrant Services

Within adult and vocational education, an often contradictory relationship exists between federal and state governments. As the Office of Technology Assessment (U.S. Congress, 1993, p. 95) observed, "although state funds now predominate, unlike the elementary and secondary education, where a mature state and local infrastructure existed before the federal government entered the field, public adult education is in many ways

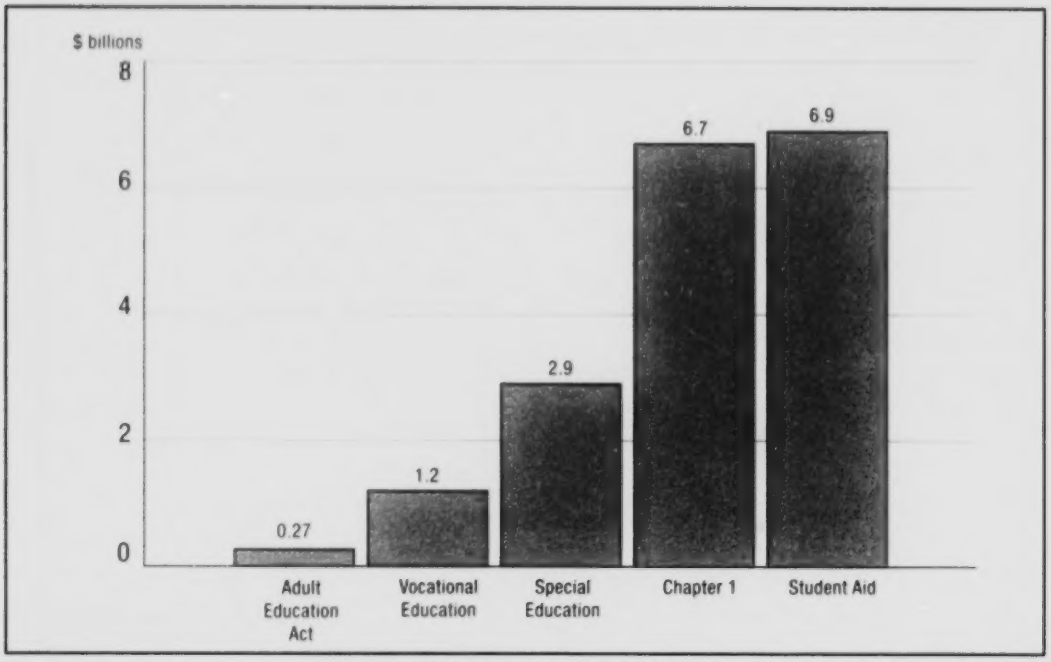

Figure 2-2 **Funding for Select Department of Education Programs, Fiscal Year 1992**

From U.S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment. (1993). *Adult Literacy and the New Technologies: Tools for a Lifetime*, p. 141. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

a federal creation." On a national level, states spend about four dollars for every dollar spent by the federal government, although amounts vary considerably from state to state (Figure 2-3). Many states have developed their own programs to carry out state-identified priorities. However, many of the major programs and policies, such as those developed through the Perkins and Job Training Partnership acts, are largely defined at the federal level with matching funds provided from states.

Nowhere is the contradiction more profound than when it comes to serving immigrants. The federal government has exclusive jurisdiction over immigration policy, including the terms and conditions for entry into the United States. No comprehensive federal policy exists, nonetheless, to provide adequately for the resettlement of refugees and immigrants. Within the realm of adult and vocational education there exists no governing body specifically charged with overseeing and coordinating the needs of immigrants and refugees. At best, as Chisman and his colleagues (1993, p. 44) assert, "ESL is always a guest in someone else's house." In most federal programs, ESL is considered to be a subcategory within basic skills or vocational training programs and often, since no separate administrative oversight, common definitions,[2] or reporting requirements exist, it is nearly impossible to identify how many immigrants are served and the nature of those services. In fact, as will be discussed later in this paper, numerous studies contend that immigrants and refugees are actively discouraged from participating in many programs. Over the years, only a very few federal grants specifically targeting the language and employment training needs of

[2] The term *basic skills*, for example, can range from ESL for a newly arrived immigrant to relatively advanced math-related skills for a computer technician. In numerous final project reports reviewed for this study, the fact that the majority of learners were limited English proficient was acknowledged nowhere in the reports.

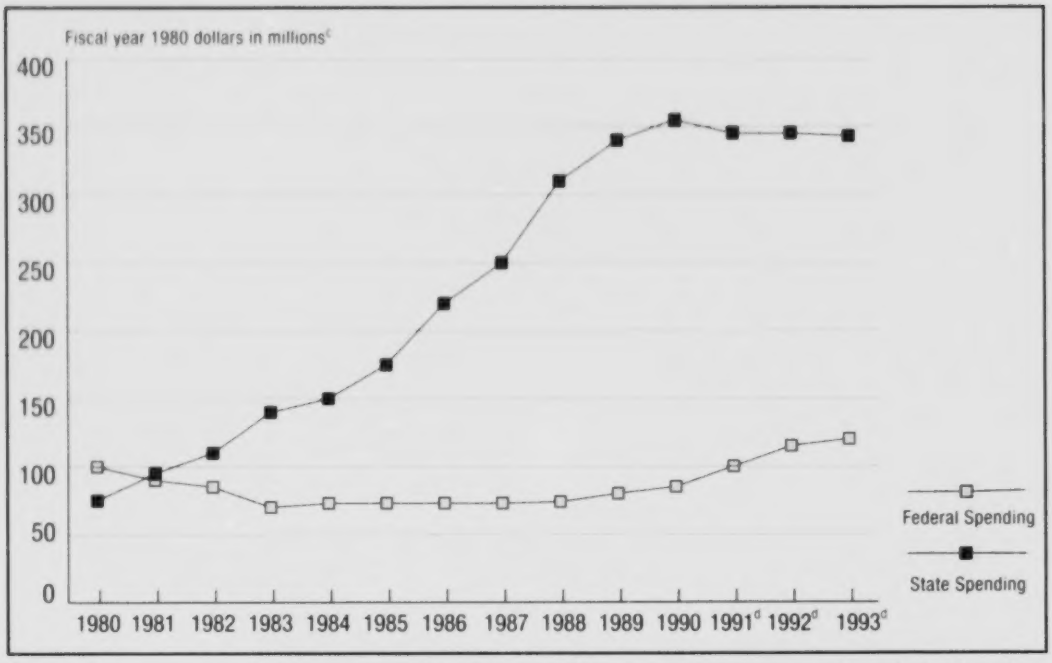

Figure 2-3 **A Comparison of Federal[a] and State/Local[b] Expenditures for Adult Education, Fiscal Years 1980-1993**

[a] Federal dollars are Federal basic grants to States under the Adult Education Act.
[b] State/local expenditures for 1991, 1992, and 1993 are estimates by the U.S. Department of Education.
[c] Fiscal year 1980 dollars were calculated using the Congressional Research Service's Implicit Deflator for State and Local Government Purchases of Services.
[d] Estimated State/local expenditures.

From U.S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment. (1993). *Adult Literacy and the New Technologies: Tools for a Lifetime*, p. 99. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

immigrants and refugees have been funded.[5] But, even these have been reduced or constrained by the federal government in recent years.[6]

As a result, as a recent study by the National Conference of State Legislatures found, state and local governments have been compelled to create immigrant policy but without sufficient resources (Morse, 1994). This is particularly troubling because, according to Georges Vernez of RAND, "the fiscal burden of immigrants increases as the size of the jurisdiction decreases, ranging from neutral or even positive at the national level, to neutral to negative at the state level, to negative at the local (county/city) level" (cited in Morse, 1994, p. 45). The study also revealed that "economists show that two thirds of the income provided by immigrants flows to the federal level, while only one third flows to states and localities" (1994, p. ix). Given the fact that immigrants' demand for services is outstripping the ability of states to provide services, economists contend that "the federal jurisdiction over immigration must be adjusted to equitably respond to the needs of both the new immigrants and state and local governments, as partners in the intergovernmental system" (p. x).

[5] The issue of whether or not it is desirable to create "targeted" populations for services has been heavily debated within the field. Some claim targeting programs for immigrants and refugees, particularly within highly impacted localities, would ensure better access to services. Others contend that this can be a screening device rather than a means for inclusion since this group can then be excluded from mainstream programs.
[6] In addition, no preparations have been made to meet the demand for services of the large numbers of limited English proficient adults who participated in the State Legalization Impact Assistance Grant program (SLIAG).

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A Description of Existing Programs

To plan a new, better integrated service delivery system, it is important to know as much as possible about the strengths and weaknesses of the existing system. The sections that follow describe what has been learned about the major funding sources and categories of programs that provide these services. More details about the *nature* of those services will be addressed in later chapters. As will be seen, the most readily available information comes from the largest service deliverers: the various federally sponsored programs. Information about state initiatives, or even the state contributions to these federal programs, was much more difficult to obtain. As has been noted, most state funds for basic education, vocational training, and workplace initiatives represent a complex web of interrelated services. None of seven key states contacted had available comprehensive documentation summarizing all of the relevant projects offered on a state level and their funding patterns, much less on how limited English proficient adults are served within that system.

U.S. Department of Education Program: The Adult Education Act — Box 2A

Authorization

The Adult Education Act (AEA) (as amended by the National Literacy Act of 1991). Scheduled for reauthorization in FY95. (P.L. 91-230). Was not reauthorized but appropriations were made at the FY95 level for FY96.

Purpose

To assist states and local districts in the provision of adult education, basic skills, and literacy services, including ESL instruction, to educationally disadvantaged adults.[5]

Funding

$278.9 million for FY95. $252.3 million goes to formula grants administered at the state level. The remainder go to workplace literacy partnerships, programs for homeless adults and prisoners, the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL), State Literacy Resource Centers and other national programs. For FY96, $259.9 million was appropriated, $250 million for the formula grants, the remainder to NIFL and literacy programs for prisoners.

Current Program Access

Public and private nonprofit entities are eligible to apply.

[5] The 1991 National Adult Literacy Act formulated a new definition of literacy as "an individual's ability to read, write, and speak in English, and compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job and in society, to achieve one's goals, and develop one's knowledge and potential" (Public Law 102-73, Sec. 3, National Literacy Act of 1991). By including the clause "in English," the authors implied the importance of English as a second language as a key component of adult basic education.

Although the focus of this report is on employment-related language and literacy training rather than general ESL, it is important to mention programs funded through the Adult Education Act, simply because, for countless immigrants and refugees, these programs offer the first opportunity for ESL and literacy education. Basic ESL (often offered at various levels such as beginning, intermediate and advanced) and ESL literacy classes (for those with no reading or writing skills in English) are often the precursors to vocational training, since students who attempt to enroll in vocational training or academic courses and who lack advanced ESL skills, are often sent back to Adult Education Act-sponsored programs to gain further language skills before being permitted to re-apply for other kinds of programs.

For many immigrants who enter jobs in the United States, AEA-sponsored classes represent the only language training ever received. Many limited English proficient adults have very limited access to other kinds of employment-related training, and adult basic education programs continue to offer the lion's share of language and literacy training available to immigrants.

The Basic State Grants, awarded to states on a formula basis, provide services primarily through local education agencies, community colleges, and, less frequently, through private, nonprofit organizations. Initially authorized in 1966, the Adult Education Act was the first major program to provide services to adults lacking basic education and has done much to shape the character and direction of adult education in states and localities today. Prior to 1966, few states had developed adult basic education programs on their own. Over the years, activities designed to encourage staff development, promote program improvement, and expand services to include various special populations have encouraged states to augment their activities. Increasingly, however, although federal policy still provides much direction, federal funds have grown to represent smaller proportions of the total budgets for adult basic education.

In recent years, ESL has come to represent a larger and larger proportion of the total population funded by the Act. In 1980, it constituted 19% of the total enrollment. By 1989, it was up to 34% (U.S. Department of Education, 1991). In 1992, the National Evaluation of Adult Education Programs found that the figure was up to 51% and was continuing to grow. Moreover, since ESL students remain in programs longer than others, their percentage of total instructional hours was even higher (Fitzgerald, 1995).

In spite of the growth in ESL, the demand for services continues to outstrip the availability of classes. In many areas students have to wait as long as one to three years before getting a space in a program. A study reported in the *New York Times* (Sontag, 1993) found that, in 1990, 17,000 immigrants were on waiting lists for ESL classes in New York City. This number included only those on lists for programs that received federal funds, not those waiting for community-and church-sponsored programs. In large urban areas, the demand for ESL far exceeds the demand for ABE. Administrators have to struggle with the issue of whether to base their service offerings on need or demand. In some states, one solution has been to split the enrollment 50-50 between ESL and ABE.

Once students do get into ESL classes, limited budgets may mean that the quality of instruction will be less than optimal. While the caliber of programs is generally improving, many classes are overcrowded (with up to 40 students

in a single class) and taught by teachers with little formal training. Many teachers work part time and have limited resources to develop curricula geared to the particular needs and interests of students. Many smaller programs must cope with multilevel classes of students with ability levels ranging from those lacking basic literacy to those with advanced degrees.

A study conducted by the Southport Institute for Policy Analysis found that ESL service remains a "neglected backwater" of the educational system (Chisman, Wrigley, & Ewen, 1993, p. 1). Although the numbers are increasing, serving the needs of this population is too often given only passing attention by policy makers. In fact, within the Adult Education Act, only one targeted program has ever been devoted to limited English proficient adults. In 1988, the National Council of La Raza, along with a coalition of other national organizations, worked with a bipartisan group of legislators to sign into law the English Literacy Grants Program as amendments to the Adult Education Act. This program was originally designed to provide grants to states for English literacy programs, staff training, support services, and demonstration projects. Although funds were authorized for up to $32 million a year, the program never received more than $1 million and ceased to exist by FY1993. Over the years, funds for the project went to a highly acclaimed national research study to identify effective and innovative instructional approaches in adult ESL literacy (Wrigley & Guth, 1992); to a research and demonstration project to explore effective means to help students make the transition between various levels of programs; and to the National Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education (NCLE), housed at the Center for Applied Linguistics—the only national organization specifically devoted to providing the field with information and referral services related to adult ESL literacy education. For the past six years, NCLE has served as a key link between practitioners, researchers, policy makers, and government representatives; their digests, books, and issue papers on state-of-the-art topics in the field, including many addressing workplace literacy issues, have been among the few in existence specifically focused on adult ESL issues.

U.S. Department of Education Program: National Workplace Literacy Grants

Box 2B

Authorization

The Adult Education Act (as amended in 1988). This program was not scheduled to be reauthorized in 1996.

Purpose

To develop partnerships between education and business to enhance the productivity of the workforce through the improvement of the basic skills of employed workers.

Funding:

$12.7 million for FY95; $0 for FY96

Current Program Access

Education and business partnerships apply to the Department of Education.

In the late 1980s, in response to increasing concerns related to the literacy skills and productivity of this country's workforce, the U.S. Department of Education introduced a new program, the first in its history designed for demonstration partnerships between business and industry. The purpose of the National Workplace Literacy Project was to provide basic skills and ESL instruction, adult secondary education, and training to upgrade workers' skills and improve their competencies in speaking, listening, reasoning, and problem solving. Financial support was provided to workplace literacy demonstration projects operated by partnerships of businesses, labor organizations, and educational organizations.

Thirty-seven projects were funded in the program's first year (FY1988) and 39 in FY1989. Funding more than doubled during the first 4 years from $9.6 million in FY1988 to $19.3 million for FY1991. Funding for FY1994 was $18.9 million; competition for grants was considerable, with over 300 applicants competing for 30 three-year awards. During the life of the project, the largest number of business partners has been from the manufacturing sector, followed by the hospital/health care industry and the hotel/hospitality industry. About a quarter of the projects have involved labor organizations. The majority of education partners are community colleges, although local school districts, community-based organizations, and institutions of higher education have also received many grants.

Compared to other federal programs, the National Workplace Literacy Program has a fairly strong record relative to serving language-minority workers. During its first year, a study conducted by Pelavin Associates found that, in the 27 (out of 37) projects for which data was collected, 24% of those served were Hispanic, 20% were black, and 9% were of Asian descent (Kutner et al., 1991). In 1992, the Department of Education estimated that 22% of the programs in their first three grant cycles served limited English proficient students exclusively. Nearly half during 1990-1991 reported serving at least some limited English proficient workers, although programs do not report the actual numbers of students served in various categories of instruction (U.S. Department of Education, 1992).

Although grants have been relatively small (most have averaged a yearly budget of only around $275,000), National Workplace Literacy Projects have represented a significant source of innovation in the area of workplace literacy. Although hard data is not available, anecdotal evidence indicates that these projects have done much to provide incentives for general adult educational programs to broaden and deepen their expertise in dealing with specific, work-based literacy requirements, including those related to workplace ESL.

Many positive outcomes have been reported from the programs, including high student retention rates, possibly as a result of curricula more closely targeted to the immediate needs of learners. Challenges remain, however. Although plans for institutionalization and replication must be built into each project, encouraging businesses and unions to continue workplace literacy programs once the federal grant money has ended remains a difficulty. Programs continue to struggle with how to demonstrate improved employee performance to businesses, thus creating stronger incentives for businesses to fund projects. A federally funded evaluation of the 3-year projects includes case studies of five projects, four of which have ESL instruction. This evaluation, when published, should provide some insight into these issues.

U.S. Department of Education Program: The Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act

Box 2C

Authorization

The Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984, reauthorized as the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act in 1990. The act was not reauthorized, but appropriations were made in FY95 and FY96.

Purpose

To prepare adults and youth for employment through vocational/technical (occupation specific) instruction with basic academic instruction.

Funding

$956 million, FY95, Basic Grants to States and $0, FY95, to the Community-Based Program. Both are administered by the states. In FY96, $972.5 million was allocated in the Basic Grants to States, and in FY97, the amount allocated was slightly more than $1 billion.

Current Program Access

State and local public education agencies, including institutions of higher education and community-based organizations.

For most of this century, various vocational education acts have been written into law to assist states in maintaining, extending, and improving vocational education to high school students and adults. It was not until 1976, when amendments to the Vocational Education Act of 1963 were passed, that serious attention was given to guarding against sex bias and discrimination. This was landmark legislation for the limited English proficient in that, for the first time, the restrictions on their ability to profit from vocational education resulting from their limited English speaking ability were recognized and their impact on their employment opportunities acknowledged. (See Bradley & Friedenberg, 1988; Friedenberg, 1993; and Friedenberg & Bradley, 1984 for a complete discussion of this issue.) This legislation followed a decade in which the needs and interests of language minorities were receiving increased attention. Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibited exclusion from programs and denial of benefits to any person on the basis of race, color, or national origin. In 1970, the Office of Civil Rights found that where inability to speak and understand the English language excludes national origin minority group children from effective participation in the educational programs offered by a school district, the district must take affirmative steps to rectify the language deficiency in order to open its instructional program to these students. These same principles, it was found, apply to vocational education students, who cannot be denied vocational education solely on the basis of limited English skills. The Bilingual Education Act, passed in 1968, continued this trend by mandating equal educational opportunity for limited English proficient children (as well as those in accredited trade, vocational, and technical schools). In 1974, the *Lau v. Nichols* Supreme Court decision further enforced the necessity of providing special programs for students who do not understand English.

In the 1976 legislation, specific funds were designated for a new kind of program called Bilin-

gual Vocational Training and for supplements to this program to provide for instructor training and the development of special methods, materials, and techniques. Although the provision of this program represented a significant step forward, overall funding was relatively small ($2 million in FY1993). Of key importance remained the integration of limited English proficient persons into the regular vocational education programs. In that area, numbers remained small. Lopez-Valadez (1989) reports that, according to the Office of Vocational and Adult Education, only 1% of all vocational enrollments were limited English proficient students in 1981. By 1984, a Vocational Education Civil Rights Survey found the numbers to be up to 1.3% of total vocational enrollments. That represented 131,101 limited English proficient students out of a total enrollment of 9,237,701. Although small gains were being made, the limited English proficient population was still seriously underrepresented, particularly at area vocational centers (Lopez-Valadez, 1989). Unfortunately, the Vocational Education Data System (VEDS), a systematic process that allowed for the collection of enrollment data from states, was suspended in 1983. Thus, figures that would enable the field to evaluate how many limited English proficient adults have had access to appropriate vocational education services are no longer available (Friedenberg, 1993).

The next major legislation, the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984, also stated that limited English proficient persons were to be actively sought and given the opportunity to enroll in any occupational area and type of vocational program, including occupation-specific courses, cooperative education, and apprenticeship training. Programs were to inform limited English proficient students and their parents about vocational opportunities and eligibility requirements and provide them with appropriate counseling, assessment, and special services to ensure their participation. Guidelines for vocational programs issued by the Office of Civil Rights reiterated that limited English proficient students could not be denied admission solely on the basis of limited English skills. Although no numeric surveys were conducted, during the eighties, several case studies examining the impact of the vocational mandates on services to limited English proficient persons were undertaken. Each study found that, for the most part, programs were not actively recruiting limited English proficient adults, and most programs continued to use the results of standardized tests to screen out limited English proficient students rather than provide remediation for them. The details of these studies will be examined in much more detail in the next chapter.

Such findings led some advocates to recommend separate set-asides (Fleischman & Willette, 1988) for limited English proficient students in upcoming legislation; however, this recommendation was never translated into policy. In fact, although the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act of 1990 targeted funds to sites with high concentrations of special populations (which includes all those who are economically disadvantaged, are physically challenged, or have limited English proficiency), it relaxed the requirements for assessment, guidance, counseling, and transition for special needs students and altered language in the act that protected the civil rights of special needs students.

No one knows for sure how many limited English proficient adults (or youth) receive services (Boesel & McFarland, 1994). In 1993, when Joan Friedenberg, a vocational ESL specialist, was asked by the National Assessment of Vocational Education (NAVE) to review existing literature in the field, she found that even though

the numbers of limited English proficient youth and adults have increased in recent years, funding has been reduced, and enforcement of regulations to protect them has been loosened. According to Friedenberg (1993, p. 73),

> Despite the lack of reliable data, it is evident from the literature that the stated and documented policies of most postsecondary vocational education programs require certain levels of English proficiency before a student can enroll in a vocational program deny or delay access based on limited English proficiency, a direct violation of civil rights regulations. This seeming lack of concern for these violations in the literature was surprising.

Although the facts seem grim, the potential for developing high quality programs does exist. Models for program designs that are effective in meeting the needs of limited English proficient students can be found within many Bilingual Vocational Training Programs and other innovative programs around the country, some of which will be detailed in Chapter 5.

In the 1976 Vocational Education Act, Congress first authorized the national Bilingual Vocational Training (BVT) program as a key component of its new effort to determine what effective and accessible programs for limited English proficient adults and out-of-school youth should be like. Programs may be designed as either job preparation for the unemployed or as job skill enhancement for working adults, although the former is more common. Three areas of emphasis were specified: 1) the funding of local programs (consisting of at least 75% of all funds); 2) the training of instructors, called Bilingual Vocational Instructor Training (BVIT); and 3) special grants for materials development, research, dissemination of promising practices through training and

U.S. Department of Education Program: The Bilingual Vocational Training Program

Box 2D

Authorization

The Vocational Amendments of 1976, reauthorized in the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Acts of 1984 and 1990. This program was not scheduled to be reauthorized in FY95 and was zeroed out.

Purpose

To support programs in the provision of occupational skills instruction and job-related English-as-a-second-language instruction to limited-English-speaking adults and out-of-school youth. Bilingual Vocational Instructor Training (BVIT) and Bilingual Vocational Materials, Methods, and Techniques (BVMMT) are related programs authorized at the same time.

Funding

$2.9 million in FY94 for the Bilingual Vocational Training Program. $0 in FY95, FY96, and FY97.

Current Program Access

Local education agencies, state agencies, postsecondary educational institutions, private vocational training organizations, and nonprofit organizations are eligible to respond to federal requests for proposals. In 1994, approximately 1,600 to 2,000 adults were served.

technical assistance, and experimental projects, termed Bilingual Vocational Materials, Methods, and Techniques Program (BVMMT). Since 1976, approximately 10 BVT programs have been funded each year (generally with each receiving between 150 and 250 thousand dollars per year). In 1994, approximately 1,600 to 2,000 adults were served by the program. BVIT programs have received about 300 to 500 thousand dollars per year and the special grants for materials development, research, and dissemination of promising practices have received about 300 to 400 thousand dollars per year. After nearly two decades, however, and despite many successes associated with the project, in 1995 this program was discontinued as part of the general effort toward consolidation.

In the late seventies and early eighties, a number of significant research and development activities took place as part of the establishment of this program, including the further definition of the emerging field of vocational English as a second language (commonly referred to as VESL) and the establishment of what came to be known as the "BVT Model" (Friedenberg & Bradley, 1984). Within this model, both English and the native language are used to allow vocational training to begin immediately. Gradually, the use of the native language decreases while the use of English increases. Job-specific language instruction (VESL) is offered concurrently with vocational training. Most often, two primary lead teachers are involved: a vocational instructor and a VESL teacher. Vocational instructors may be bilingual or employ bilingual teachers aides, use peer teachers, or use other methods to make instruction comprehensible to students. Teachers in both components ideally coordinate closely with one another to make sure that the language curriculum is geared to the communication needs of a particular occupational skill and that the students are understanding the job skills content taught in the vocational classes. Attention is also given to cross-cultural issues students will face in the classroom and the workplace. Several other support components are also advocated by the program, including intake and assessment procedures that are both appropriate and diagnostic rather than exclusionary; recruitment, counseling and support services; and job development and placement geared to the special needs of limited English proficient individuals (Friedenberg, 1987).

Many of those who have conducted case studies of vocational education programs serving limited English proficient adults have found the BVT model to be very effective for teaching job skills and English language skills simultaneously (Cichon, Grover, & Thomas, 1990). More recent research related to learning language in the content area reinforces the notion that using language to complete authentic tasks (rather than simply as an end in itself) enhances the language learning process. Unfortunately, however, as will be discussed in the next chapter, existing research has been descriptive in nature. No examples of systematic inquiry that might demonstrate the effectiveness of this strategy for language learning, how it impacts the acquisition of specific vocational skills, or the extent to which such a process leads to successful, long-term employment have been found. Nor was data uncovered concerning how many BVT programs have been continued once their federal funding ran out. Nevertheless, even with its limited funding and scope, the BVT program has contributed much to the field. Many of the innovative projects mentioned in Chapter 4 are the result of projects funded under this grant program.

U.S. Department of Labor Program: The Job Training Partnership Act

Box 2E

Authorization

Job Training Partnership Act, as amended by Job Training Reform Amendments of 1992.

Purpose

To prepare youth and adults facing serious barriers to employment for participation in the labor force by providing job training and other services that will result in increased employment and earnings, increased educational and occupational skills, and decreased welfare dependency, thereby improving the quality of the workforce and enhancing the productivity and competitiveness of the nation.

Funding

For projects related to adults: $996 million for FY95 for Title IIA, $850 million for FY96, and $850 million for FY97.

Current Program Access

Title II is a state formula grant program in which 77% of state funds are distributed to the local service delivery areas (SDAs) within each state and 23% is held at the state level for incentives, educational coordination, and capacity building. Programs operate at the local level through the SDAs and private industry councils (PICs). Local programs usually contract with other local providers to deliver the required services.

The Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) is the largest of all federal job training program systems. Funding for all programs totals approximately $4 billion. Many programs exist within JTPA. Title II programs serve economically disadvantaged adults and youth (with Title IIA being the largest program serving adults). Older and dislocated workers are served by Title III. Title IV serves migrant and seasonal farmworkers, programs for Native Americans and others who face significant employment barriers as well as the Job Corps for at-risk youth (Morse, 1994). Services within JTPA include basic skills education (including English as a second language); on-the-job-training, assessment, and counseling; education-to-work transition activities; bilingual training; and customized training. Training-related and support services include job search assistance, outreach, and services to enable participation in the program, such as child care. In 1991, about 704,000 adults were served through Title IIA (Chisman, Wrigley, & Ewen, 1993).

As was the case with the Perkins Act, the first major federal effort toward job training for the disadvantaged began in the early 1960s with the Manpower Development and Training Act. In 1973, Congress expanded and consolidated employment training efforts with the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA), which at its peak in 1979 was funded at $10.3 billion. In 1982, CETA was replaced by JTPA. Funding was significantly reduced, and the public service "jobs" programs were eliminated. There was a new focus on jobs in the private sector and decision making was delegated to the states and channeled through local Private Industry Councils (PICs). The new JTPA contracts were "performance-based," providing

for scaled levels of payment on the contract based on the completion of such outcomes as participant intake, retention in the training program, successful completion, and job placement. Serious concerns have surfaced over the role of this performance-based system in encouraging programs to neglect the hardest to serve clients. As a result, the most recent 1992 amendments designated target groups with barriers to employment. At least 65% of those served must fall in one or more of the listed target groups (including those deficient in basic skills such as English reading or computing skills at or below the eighth-grade level) (Morse, 1994). In addition, in 1992 legislation, there is an 8% set-aside for state educational coordination and service grants, one of whose allowable activities is the provision of literacy services. Programs are increasingly beginning to use these funds to establish linkages with other federal programs such as Perkins, JOBS, food stamps, and Head Start, and with local education agencies.

Since many limited English proficient adults fall under the JTPA definition of "economically disadvantaged," it might be expected that JTPA would be a major source of language and employment training for immigrants and refugees. Indications are, however, that it is not. The Southport Institute cites U.S. Department of Labor estimates of 1991 showing that approximately 17,000 limited English proficient adults were served under Title IIA. This, they point out, is only about 2.4% of the adults served and is disproportionately low given the size of the limited English proficient population in the United States. Moreover, using JTPA's definition of "economically disadvantaged," they estimate that limited English proficient individuals should constitute 16 to 21% of the population eligible for JTPA service (Chisman, Wrigley, & Ewen, 1993). A few years earlier, a study by the National Council of La Raza uncovered similar findings. Hispanics and other limited English proficient groups, they discovered, comprised fewer than 5% of JTPA adult and youth enrollments and 3% of those who complete training (Romero & Gonzales, 1989). (Equally troubling was the fact that among these 5%, few were young high school dropouts with limited English proficiency, a group likely to face severe employment barriers.)

Why are limited English proficient adults so underserved? According to a 1991 report by the Government Accounting Office, several factors account for disparities in services provided to minorities (Morse, 1994). By far the most important has to do with the performance standards system at the core of the program. Localities funded as service delivery areas (SDAs) are assigned performance standards that prescribe expected levels of performance. SDAs are required to place certain proportions of their trainees into jobs within specified costs and wage ranges, although these proportions vary according to policies set by the state governments. Performance standards include such factors as the proportion of program participants entering employment, wage at placement, and the average program cost per participant. Program contractors, such as community-based organizations and schools, are paid a flat sum for achieving certain "positive" termination goals. Because hard-to-serve clients are more expensive to serve and more difficult to place in jobs, contractors have a strong incentive for screening applicants in order to serve those who have the most skills, have the most education, and can be trained most quickly and at the least cost. In most states, SDA administrators have established formal standards that most limited English proficient adults cannot meet, such as that only people who can pass a standardized test in English

reading at the sixth- to ninth-grade level (depending on the SDA) will be admitted into the program. JTPA has been heavily criticized for "creaming." Critics claim that the program often plays the role of a job screening service by preparing the most desirable employees to fill entry-level jobs in the private sector instead of serving as a program for the disadvantaged.

Even when hard-to-serve clients are accepted into the program, the services they receive may not be enough to prepare them to find good jobs. Most JTPA programs provide only a few months to a year of training. Even if training for limited English proficient adults does include ESL instruction, quite often this is not enough to bring their language skills up to the necessary levels. Moreover, as compared to whites, minorities are more often placed directly into job placement programs rather than training programs. A study by Abt Associates of the impact of Title IIA on earnings and employment found that although JTPA had positive effects on earnings and employment of adults in general, it did not appear to benefit Hispanics; their post-training earnings were lower regardless of age or gender (Bloom, Orr, Cave, Bell, & Doolittle, 1992).

Some private industry councils are beginning to recognize this problem and to work with contractors such as community-based organizations to find ways to integrate language and job training. In addition, various components of the 1992 amendments were designed to target hard-to-serve populations better (such as making bilingual training an allowable activity). Statistics that might show the impact of these changes on current limited English proficient enrollment rates, however, are not available. Data on JTPA are more frequently available at the state and local level rather than the federal level; specific expenditures for literacy education (which would include the extent to which job-related vocational English as a second language is offered) are not available for JTPA.

In an extensive literature search and phone survey of major advocacy groups serving linguistic minority adults, the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) was able to uncover no recent studies of JTPA's record serving limited English proficient adults in the 1990s. The 1989 study, *Falling Through the Cracks: Hispanic Underrepresentation in the Job Training Partnership Act*, commissioned by the National Council of La Raza (Romero & Gonzales, 1989) appears to be the only such document in existence. It calls for closer ties with community-based organizations, a higher cap on supportive services such as transportation and child care, longer training periods for limited English proficient adults, the integration of vocational English as a second language and vocational skills training, the selective use of bilingual vocational instruction, and better data collection and dissemination processes.

In addition to Title IIA, one JTPA program of particular interest is the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Program, under Title IV. This program provides job training; work experience; job search assistance; literacy, basic skills, and English-as-a-second-language instruction; and related supportive services to assist migrant and seasonal farmworkers who are chronically unemployed or underemployed to seek alternative job opportunities that will enable them to obtain stable, year-round employment. This program, which has been in operation since the 1960s, is currently funded for FY1995 at $85 million. Ninety-four percent of the funds are allocated to states on a formula basis. States typically contract with public agencies or private

nonprofit organizations to provide education and training services. Approximately 40,000 adults are served each year by the program. According to JTPA officials, about a third of these are limited English proficient. Once again, very little data concerning the kinds of services offered are collected at the national level.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Program: The Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) Program

Box 2F

Authorization
The Family Support Act of 1988

Purpose
To help eligible Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) recipients (primarily women) to obtain the education, training, and assistance needed to secure employment that will help them avoid long-term welfare dependency and achieve self-sufficiency.

Funding
$970 million for FY95 (capped entitlement) and $1 billion for FY96 and FY97. This is a state formula grant program with a significant state-matching requirement.

Current Program Access
State welfare agencies are charged with administering the program. State and local adult education programs can contract with the state or local welfare agencies to provide education service.

In August of 1996, President Clinton signed welfare reform legislation into law that, while not ending the JOBS program immediately, sets in motion a mechanism for phasing out federally funded basic adult and ESL instructional programs to be replaced by individual state programs. Recipients have a five-year lifetime limit on benefits, and legal immigrants will not be eligible to receive benefits the first five years they are in the country. Adults receiving welfare have no more than two years to find work or engage in work activities. These work activities may include job training or vocational education, but all literacy instruction must be directly linked to job tasks. There is also a one-year cap on the length of time welfare recipients can spend in vocational programs (Business Publishers, August 15, 1996; September 26, 1996; October 10, 1996). Clearly, this new welfare bill will have a strong impact on second language learners.

Until recently, major legislation funding welfare-related education has been the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training (JOBS) Program of the Family Support Act of 1988. The program targets Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) recipients (most often single mothers). They are provided with some combination of education, work experience, job training, and job search

services in an effort to assist them to find and keep a job. Provisions for paid child care and transportation reimbursements are also part of the program. States are given wide discretion in the implementation of their JOBS programs, although, as state resources have become more limited, states have faced hard choices with respect to whom to serve, the kinds and sequences of services, and on which groups to concentrate funds. In FY1992, states spent only about two thirds of the $1 billion appropriation. Tight budgets precluded many states from finding the required matching funds. In some states, requirements are met through voluntary participation. Others, however, mandate participation, cutting clients' monthly AFDC allotments if they fail to participate. States also vary in the extent to which they emphasize and invest in basic education and job training or focus on unpaid work experience and job search processes.

As was the case with JTPA, it is difficult to ascertain the extent to which JOBS programs serve immigrant and refugee adults. Although a major study of the JOBS program was commissioned, data concerning the participation of linguistic minorities, particularly services to those who are limited English proficient, was not collected (Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation, 1991). A study by the National Council of La Raza, *Latinos and JOBS: A Review of Ten States and Puerto Rico*, however, found that Latinos as a group are underrepresented by JOBS (Rodriguez & Martinez, 1995). (They constitute 17.8% of nationwide AFDC cases, but only 12.8% of nationwide average monthly JOBS participants.) This is true, La Raza found, in seven of the ten states with the largest Latino populations.

Again, as with JTPA, there are external pressures on agencies to produce quick results, leading to the choice of participants based on their probability of successful placement rather than their degree of need. JOBS officials report that they underserve AFDC recipients with limited English proficient abilities, either by not admitting them to the JOBS programs or by placing them in job search and placement activities rather than education programs. The National Council of State Legislatures found that when limited English proficient adults do receive education, it is often in the form of *general* English-as-a-second-language classes alone (Morse, 1994). Money to allow contractors to integrate skills and training instruction with language education is often not available. Some clients are placed in work experience programs that provide them with little opportunity to develop their language fluency in English or learn new job skills (Gillespie, 1992). As with the JTPA- and Perkins-funded programs, limited English proficient clients who would like to enroll in occupational skills programs are often denied access due to an inability to pass the placement tests. Since JOBS only provides for ESL classes of a short duration, for most, the chances of attaining the language skills that might allow them to enter vocational training are also out of reach. As a result, many JOBS clients often continue to lack the skills that would allow them to get a job that might yield a living wage for their families.

In a review of welfare-to-work programs during the 1980s, the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (1991) found that participation in programs they studied led to improvements in earnings and/or employment gains. Employment and earnings impacts were not found, however, when resources per eligible individual were too low to provide employment-directed assistance, or when programs were operated in rural areas with very weak labor markets. Thus, states face a tough dilemma: to provide low-cost services that may reach greater numbers of people but achieve less long-term impact or to provide integrated educational programs that serve fewer clients but permanently reduce their long-term welfare dependency.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Program: The Refugee and Entrant Assistance Program

Box 2G

Authorization

The Refugee Act of 1980, through the Office of Refugee Resettlement.

Purpose

This program provides direct payments to states for supporting medical assistance, social services, and targeted assistance for eligible refugees and Cuban and Haitian entrants. Mainstream English Language Training (MELT) projects funded by the program have supported testing and refinement of assessment instruments, curriculum development, training and technical assistance, and instruction in English.

Funding

$389.2 million in FY94

Current Program Access

Resettlement agencies designated by the states.

The Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, administers the primary U.S. domestic refugee resettlement program through the Refugee Act of 1980. In their *Report to Congress* (1993), the Office of Refugee Resettlement estimated that in FY1993, 119,100 refugees and Amerasian immigrants were admitted to the United States. (About 43% of these came from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, and another 42% came from Southeast Asia.) During FY1993, a total of $381.5 million was appropriated for the costs of assisting refugees and Cuban and Haitian entrants. Of this, states received about $214 million to provide cash and medical assistance, primarily to refugees during the first eight months of their arrival. Other funds went to programs to provide health screening and services, social services, and educational programs. Education and training programs are allowable activities under several special programs, demonstration projects, and discretionary grants, although data does not appear to be kept on how much of the funding in each category is actually spent for education and training.

Of all immigrant groups, refugees have the highest unemployment rate and dependence on public assistance. This is perhaps not surprising given the traumatic conditions of their escape from war-torn countries and often long stays in countries of first asylum. The Refugee Act of 1980 assumed the need to provide extensive initial resettlement support to those newcomers specifically invited to the United States as a humanitarian gesture. As Figure 2-4 shows, during the early eighties, states were provided with federal categorical aid for up to 36 months for each refugee and cash and medical assistance for 18 months. During the late eighties and early nineties, however, the length of time refugees could receive federal aid and the amount of aid dropped dramatically. This was not due to reduced numbers of arrivals. While the numbers of refugees have increased, the amount of overall funding to attend to their domestic resettlement needs has significantly decreased (Figure 2-5)[e].

[e] Zimmerman (1994) estimates that federal cash and medical assistance funding per refugee fell by 74% between 1984 and 1992, and social service spending fell by 60 percent (after accounting for inflation) (Morse, 1994, p. 76).

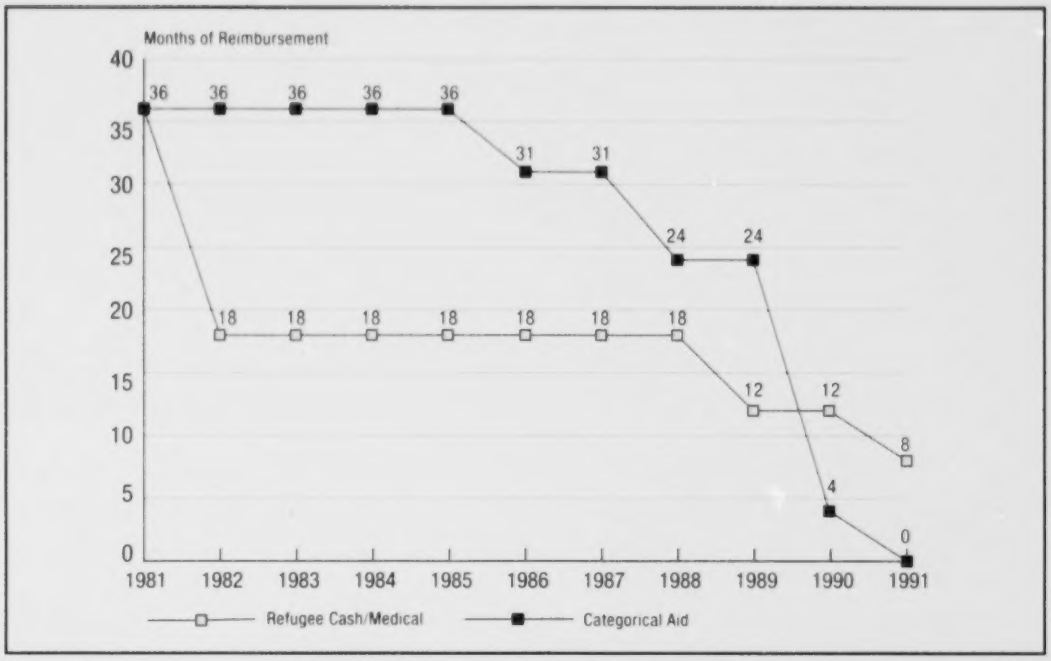

Figure 2-4 **Federal Refugee Assistance: Reimbursement to the States: 1981 to 1991**

Reprinted with permission from Morse, A. (Ed.). (1994). *America's Newcomers: An Immigrant Policy Handbook*, p. 4. Washington, DC: National Conference of State Legislatures.

For many refugees, the short duration (often less than 8 months) of ESL and cultural orientation programs received in the refugee camps is not sufficient to prepare them for work in the United States. A study by the Urban Institute and the American Public Welfare Association found that, as funding was reduced during the eighties, some states had to forego offering language and job training in order to pay for job placement services. The survey revealed that, of all social services, states were most likely to reduce English language training. Eighteen out of 40 states reported either reducing the number of sites or hours of language training, reducing the duration of services, or eliminating language instruction altogether (Zimmerman, 1994, p. 77). These organizations question the long-term wisdom of this approach, however, since their studies have found reducing language services can have a significant effect on earnings and employment. People in entry-level jobs (the only ones likely to be available to those with very limited language skills) are subject to frequent layoffs, and only those in multiple-income households with combined incomes earn enough to be self-sufficient. Refugees with vocational training are more likely to be employed and to have more stable jobs with higher pay (Zimmerman, 1994).

Recently the Office of Refugee Resettlement has tried to respond to the need for education by channeling the special projects and discretionary funds they do have toward education and job training. The Social Services Programs, with about $65 million in FY1993, distribute funds to the states in formula grants for a broad range of services. Once a state's refugee

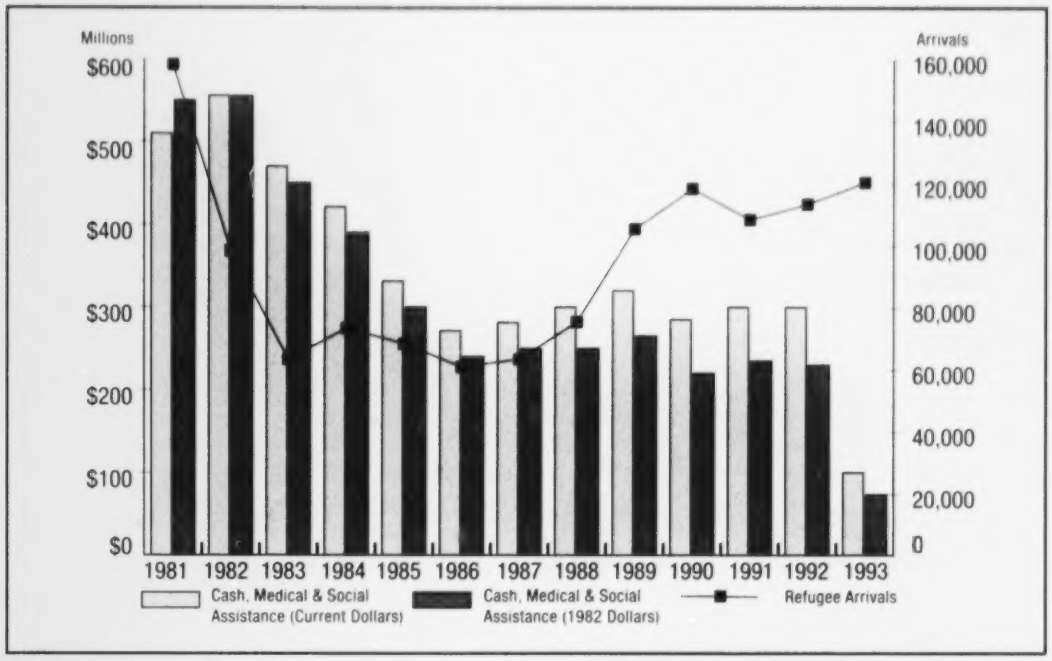

Figure 2-5 **Refugee Resettlement Funds vs. Refugee Arrivals**

Reprinted with permission from Morse, A. (Ed.). (1994). *America's Newcomers: An Immigrant Policy Handbook*, p. 4. Washington, DC: National Conference of State Legislatures.

welfare utilization is 55% or more, however, 85% of those social service funds must be used for English language training, vocational training, employment counseling, and job placement. "High impact" areas (counties with large refugee or entrant populations, a high proportion of refugees or entrants to the overall population, and high public assistance use) can also draw from the $44 million (FY1993). The Targeted Assistance Program is designed to develop programs that get refugees into jobs quickly, usually within one year. Eighty-five percent of these funds must be used for employment-related services. The problem of persistent welfare dependency is also the impetus for a series of National Discretionary Projects, funded at $11.9 million. Activities in various states include projects to link refugees with local jobs, to provide opportunities for unemployed refugees to relocate to communities with favorable employment prospects, and to promote small businesses and self-employment among refugees. Finally, the Wilson/Fish Demonstration Projects ($5.9 million) allow a few projects the chance to experiment with alternative approaches, such as front-loading assistance by providing a more intensive, integrated language training, pre-employment, job placement, and case management program to refugees during the first few months after arrival to judge long-term impact on increased self-sufficiency (Office of Refugee Resettlement, 1993). The fact remains that, without sufficient federal funds, increasing numbers of refugees find themselves competing with other immigrants for the existing slots in adult education programs or, if they qualify for welfare, in JOBS programs. Once again, the burden is often shifted to the state and local levels.

Other Federally Funded Programs

Many other federal agencies provide adult education services on a more limited scale. Here are just a few examples: The Department of Defense, the Air Force, Marine Corps, Navy, and Army all provide some kinds of educational services to improve the work performance of their members, including English as a second language, although they vary greatly in scope and size. By far the largest program is offered by the U.S. Army Basic Skills Education Program. The Army provides an English Comprehension Level Test and offers instruction to soldiers who score below a designated level on the test. Within the U.S. Department of Agriculture, a program exists to provide education and training to recipients of food stamps, thereby improving their employability, although in many states the extent of actual services, including ESL services, is unclear. Community Development Block Grants under the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development also allow for basic education services as part of their community development activities, but since budgets for these activities are not calculated separately, it is difficult to ascertain the extent to which ESL and training services might be provided (Alamprese & Sivilli, 1992).

Colleges and Community Colleges

Across the United States, universities and community colleges offer a variety of programs and services to limited English proficient adults. Many programs simply offer non-credit ESL prior to enrollment in community college classes. Others provide non-credit, short-term job training programs along with ESL or vocational ESL. Credit courses in ESL are available and, in some locations, vocational ESL and/or bilingual support during a student's enrollment in a certificate or degree program. (Various models for vocational and language training will be detailed in Chapter 4.) One or two larger community colleges, such as Hostos in the Bronx, even offer comprehensive vocational ESL master plans for the college as a whole. In addition, some community colleges are also developing and marketing to private industry customized workforce training programs (offered either at the college or at the worksite), many of which are geared toward limited English proficient employees or toward addressing cross-cultural issues in the workplace.

A survey of major national organizations representing universities and community colleges did not uncover statistics regarding the extent of limited English proficient student participation in these kinds of programs. It does appear, however, that community colleges take the lead in delivering vocationally related services to limited English proficient immigrant adults as compared to universities. Their involvement in this area is growing. A recent study by the American Association of Community Colleges (Thomas, Bird, & Grover, 1992b) has provided the field with a comprehensive picture of the role community colleges are taking in serving vocational ESL students. The study targeted programs and services to limited English proficient students in 15 states. In those 15 states, the authors contacted about 100 community colleges that offered some kind of English language instruction for second language speakers. About half of these colleges had some kind of special programs and services for limited English proficient vocational students.

Funding for the programs, they found, comes from a variety of sources. The largest of these sources include state and local appropriations for colleges and community colleges, tuition and fees paid by students, Pell Grants, and other forms of financial assistance. In addition, some programs have sought additional sources of funding from federal and state grants (such as Perkins or JTPA grants, Bilingual Vocational Training Program funds, and others). The study found that many programs and services

for limited English proficient students began with external funding and were separate from mainstream college structures. Over time, a number of these programs, or adapted forms of them, were integrated into the college. In general, they observed that the more institutionalized a program or service became, the better the chances for long-term stability. Many administrators acknowledged long waiting lists for their ESL-related programs and stated they would like to provide more services. They echo the funding concerns heard throughout this report: They are often at capacity for accepting students, face hiring freezes, or are restricted from developing new program initiatives. Many rely on cost-saving measures such as employing part-time faculty and increasing class sizes to meet the need.

Since many limited English proficient adults are from low-income families, the availability of financial aid is often a determining factor in participation in vocational programs. Yet, winding one's way through the application procedures can be daunting for individuals unfamiliar with the process. Several institutions provide translations of forms and policy statements as well as bilingual support to guide students through the process. Of key importance, many have found, is helping students to become aware of financial aid deadlines so that they do not apply too late in the funding cycle to be considered for a program. Another obstacle to obtaining financial aid is what is referred to as *ability to benefit* testing. In order to qualify for financial aid, students must be able to show they have sufficient prior education (such as a high school diploma or GED) or they must pass some form of standardized test, in most cases offered only in English.

A number of community colleges have taken the lead in exploring other options to prove a student's ability to benefit. Based on in-depth studies of nine community colleges, the study by Thomas, Bird and Grover (1992b) found that, although a wide variety of models and approaches could be effective, a major academic need at all sites was for ESL specifically linked to the vocational program, whether it was offered before the vocational program, concurrently with the program, or made available through VESL support centers. A wide variety of ESL components are being explored, including concurrent VESL, pre-employment VESL, VESL with on-the-job training, and "bridge" courses to introduce the field while working on vocation-specific language and related academic skills. Another special challenge faced by many community colleges has to do with serving students who have had some education in this country but have either dropped out of school or in other ways not met with much success. Many come to college with a poor self-image and need to build self-esteem in order to become motivated academically. Many also lack the kinds of family supports that might facilitate their getting an education. Programs serving large numbers of these students stress the importance of support services such as bilingual counseling, language tutoring, learning labs, and, in some programs, a case-management approach.

Unfortunately, there exists little comprehensive information about higher education programs specifically directed toward allowing those immigrants who come into the country with advanced degrees to become certified to practice their profession here. Clearly such programs exist. Florida, for example, allows foreign doctors to become physician's assistants through a process of attending one year of education at the University of Miami and participating in one year of supervised practice by a Florida doctor. Brown University has a one-to-one program for engineers that uses technology-specific English training and includes preparation for certification. Due to periodic critical shortages of personnel in medically related fields, a number of institutions provide

training to prepare foreign nurses and other medical personnel for certification. The lack of collected information and studies about these kinds of programs is both surprising and disturbing, given the nation's future needs for workers with advanced training.

Privately Funded Programs

What is the investment of business and industry in language training and workplace education for immigrant adults? No one knows for sure. In recent years, studies of adult education have lamented the relatively small proportions of training dollars that go to training entry-level workers.

The Office of Technology Assessment's major study *Worker Training: Competing in the New International Economy* (U.S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment, 1990) found that corporate America spends between $30 and $44 billion on worker training each year. However, $27 billion of that amount is spent by just 5% of U.S. employers. Only a small number spend more than 2% of their payrolls on employee training programs, and the vast majority spend little or nothing on formal training for their employees. The American Society for Training and Development estimates that only one in ten employees receives training on the job (Carnevale, 1991). Among those companies that do spend money on training, two thirds of the total funds are devoted to services for college-educated employees. Training for literacy and language education, it is estimated, represents only a tiny fraction of total spending. And, a survey done by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (U.S. Department of Labor, 1994) revealed that only 3% of the 12,000 businesses surveyed offered training in basic skills or in ESL.

However, as will be discussed in Chapter 5, indications are that interest on the part of private business and unions in workplace education has been growing during the 1990s as workplace literacy programs for entry-level workers have become more sophisticated and as programs have learned to market their services to the private sector. (And, given the limited funds in general for basic skills education for adults, even a small increase in business and labor contributions can have a significant impact.) In some states, such as Illinois, state government has offered incentives by providing matching funds of $10,000 to any business that invests in a workplace literacy program. There is evidence that some of these programs and others, such as those funded through the National Workplace Literacy Program, have continued operation (albeit sometimes on a reduced level) after the outside funding has ended. Unions have also played a strong role by negotiating for workplace education programs.

In addition, community colleges have recently become more adept at marketing customized training services to the private sector. A recent national study of customized training by the League for Innovation in the Community College (Doucette, 1993) found that 73% of the respondents (763 of the 1,042 two-year colleges responding) had programs in place designed to deliver workforce training for employees in business, industry, labor, and government. Most of these initiatives were fairly new, with the majority having come into being in the last five years. Such activities are expanding the mission and focus of community colleges, but, because many programs are still so new, relatively little is known about the mix of services offered to businesses. Many educators speculate, however, that workplace ESL may well represent a significant part of the overall workplace literacy effort. Employers concerned about the basic skills of their workers may be more likely to identify language problems among front-line workers before they are able to note more subtle difficulties with

literacy or mathematics. In addition, improved communication skills—in areas such as better customer satisfaction—represent a training priority for many program managers.

A recent study of 21 Illinois businesses helps to illuminate why businesses offer basic skills and ESL programs for front-line workers (Illinois Literacy Resource Development Center, 1993). Among the 14 companies that *did* offer services, they found that the major deciding factors were a drive for quality improvement, commitment on the part of top management, or the sales effort of an educational vendor. Most of those citing quality improvement were manufacturing firms that found they were unable to implement new production techniques successfully until basic skills and communication needs of employees were addressed. The major deterrent to offering programs on the part of employers was cost, although the study found that many managers were unaware of the actual costs and often tended to overestimate the potential expense.

With notable exceptions, existing workplace ESL programs have been criticized for their limited scope and duration. Some programs are as short as six to eight weeks. The focus of instruction is often on narrow, very specific job-related tasks. While short-term, targeted training to meet an immediate need can be useful in many contexts, critics argue that such programs do not provide sufficient language education and cultural orientation to the American workplace to allow workers to become fluent in the English language and may neglect the long-term needs of the employee in favor of short-term requirements of employers. Interestingly, the Illinois study mentioned earlier revealed data indicating that, as management became aware of the benefits of basic skills and ESL training, the level of commitment changed. They found that employers noted significant positive impacts of training on their work forces. Rather than changes related to concrete job tasks, however, they found gains were attitudinal and were reflected in increased output, improved quality, and better communication. Once they recognized changes in employee attitude and commitment, employers not only were influenced to go forward with more training but also tended to support ongoing education with more general goals such as improved communication.

The Funding Outlook for the Future

On a federal level, the state of funding for adult education and vocational training is in a period of flux. Although everyone agrees that current plans do not represent "business as usual," no one knows for sure what kinds of changes may emerge in the coming months and years. Many of the programs listed in this chapter may be consolidated or eliminated. Decision making concerning the nature and extent of services will move from the federal to the state and local levels. Consolidation and coordination alone, however, cannot make up for the significant need for services. "Nor does it answer how mainstream programs, attempting to serve a broad range of disadvantaged people, can serve those functioning at low literacy levels and/or those without adequate English language skills" (Morse, 1994, p. 42).

Currently, federal job training programs serve a small percentage of the eligible populations of immigrants and refugees. Those few federal programs specifically targeting limited English speaking populations are likely to be eliminated. Some states and localities have developed programs specific to the needs of immigrants; however, information about those programs is not widely available. Private support, although growing, has been relatively limited. Although a number of programs have picked up funding once training is initiated, they have often been dependent on outside support to provide the

initial impetus to begin services. Advocates fear that, without concerted attention given to the needs of the ESL population, the gap in services will continue to grow at the very time when the need has increased most dramatically. The potential to harness the abilities of immigrant adults to fill the growing number of jobs requiring advanced skills will be wasted unless efforts are found to train them effectively for the jobs of tomorrow.

National, state, and local leadership is needed now more than ever to determine the most effective use for existing funds and to demonstrate the value of language and employment-related training for immigrants. The next three chapters will focus on providing information useful for that decision-making process by highlighting the current state of research within the field (Chapter 3) and approaches to serving immigrant adults in vocational programs (Chapter 4) and at the worksite (Chapter 5). Although research has been severely limited and practitioners have faced many constraining factors, there is much that has been learned about how best to educate immigrant adults for jobs.

Chapter Three

The Research Base: What Has Changed in Two Decades?

The mid-seventies represented a turning point for the newly emerging fields of vocational and workplace education for non-native speakers of English. The first wave of Southeast Asian refugees began to arrive on U.S. shores, creating a new stimulus to explore effective methods to teach language and job-related skills to adult non-native speakers (Ranard & Pfleger, 1993, 1995). At the same time, as discussed in Chapter 2, legislation began to recognize the needs of language minority children and adults. The year 1976 brought the advent of the Bilingual Vocational Training Program, and with it, by the early eighties, a series of materials that sought to define vocational English as a second language (VESL) as an approach to language instruction and to elaborate the necessary components of an integrated system of services that might help adult immigrants and refugees to succeed in vocational training. There was, within the literature, a sense of new beginnings and optimism. What has changed, from a research perspective, in the last two decades? In two words, not enough.

Although research in other fields, such as second language acquisition and adult learning theory, had important implications for improving instruction to limited English proficient vocational students, research specifically directed toward this population has been scant. That which does exist goes little beyond stating the need for services. As yet, little is known from a research perspective about the kinds of language, skills, and cultural understandings needed on the job, or how and under what conditions various kinds of instruction might be most effective. This is not to say the field has not progressed significantly in twenty years. Funding, however, has been primarily for direct services. What progress has been made in the field has come about as the result of the collective experiences of practitioners who have applied research conducted in other fields to this context or who have learned from direct experience.

This chapter presents an overview of the findings of those research and evaluation studies that have been conducted in the United States in areas relevant to VESL, vocational, and workplace education. They fall primarily into three categories:

1. Case studies of existing services;
2. Studies of the linguistic and cultural demands of the workplace; and
3. Recent trends in second language instruction as they apply to employment-related English as a second language.

Case Studies of Vocational Services for Limited English Proficient Adults

During the late 1970s and early 1980s, a number of documents were produced that served to set the stage for vocational education for limited English proficient adults. The Center for Applied Linguistics published several studies laying out the basic principles associated with this new instructional area. These included

Adult Vocational ESL (Crandall, 1979), *Foundations and Strategies for Bilingual Vocational Education* (Bradley & Friedenberg, 1982), and *From the Classroom to the Workplace: Teaching English to Adults* (CAL, 1983). Other groups produced documents during this period that laid out the competencies required for instructors (Kirschner & Associates, 1980) and assisted administrators to initiate new programs (Lopez-Valadez, 1979). A discussion of some descriptive case studies follows.

An Early Look at Bilingual Vocational Training

In 1981, the Office of Bilingual and Minority Language Affairs at the then National Institute of Education asked Troike and his colleagues to conduct a case study of vocational services to limited English proficient adults. Troike investigated nine bilingual vocational training programs in sites around the United States to discover common factors and practices that contributed to successful outcomes. The group examined job placement rates as well as the quality of program planning and needs assessment processes, the attendance and achievement levels of trainees, and the background of the staff. The basic finding of the study (Troike, Golub, & Lugo, 1981) supported the fact that, if properly implemented, a bilingual approach could be a highly effective means for providing vocational training to limited-English-speaking persons. The study laid out many of the key components necessary for effective program development, factors still relevant today, including the need for sufficient up-front planning time prior to program implementation, the importance of a needs assessment to match training areas to the local job market, the value of trained, bilingual staff, and the importance of strong collaboration between the vocational and ESL instructional components. Unfortunately, although this study laid the groundwork for further program studies, there was very little follow-up using this model.

A Case Study of Non-Bilingual Vocational Training Programs

During the eighties, some additional curriculum development and program planning materials were published. However, it was not until 1987 that another national evaluation of services to limited English proficient adult vocational students was undertaken. Commissioned by the National Commission for Research in Vocational Education, Friedenberg's *The Condition of Vocational Education for Limited English Proficient Persons in Selected Areas of the United States* (1987) examined for the first time the practices of those vocational programs that served limited English proficient students (in this case secondary *and* adult) but did not have federal Bilingual Vocational Training funding. Friedenberg visited programs in California, Florida, New York, Texas, Michigan, New Mexico, and Connecticut, including two secondary school programs, two adult programs, and one industry-based program in each state. The research design included classroom observations and structured interviews with staff and students.

The results, she found, were discouraging (Friedenberg, 1987). Although there were a few highly successful exceptions, for the most part limited English proficient students were not accommodated in programs outside those specifically funded by the Bilingual Vocational Training monies. Attempts to actively recruit these students for vocational programs were limited. Most programs had not developed intake processes that took into account the needs of limited English proficient students. Valid instruments to assess English language proficiency were not used, and vocational interests, basic

skills, and literacy levels were not assessed in the native language. Bilingual aides, who for the most part were paid a low wage and received little or no training, were either underutilized by programs, serving only to perform such tasks as passing out paper, or they were expected to teach and counsel teachers. One half to one third of the vocational programs that served limited English proficient students provided no ESL instruction, much less vocational ESL instruction. Of the schools that had ESL instruction, fewer than half provided vocational ESL. Most staff had little if any training regarding the special needs of limited English proficient vocational students. When access and services for limited English proficient students *did* exist, Friedenberg observed, it was because there was a clear, nonexclusionary policy and at least one full-time capable person to implement services for vocational ESL students. This person might be found at the school, district, or state level.

A National Survey

Although this study was limited in scope, it did alert planners to the serious problems associated with service delivery to limited English proficient students. During the same year, these findings were corroborated by questions asked of the states as part of a broad nationwide survey of vocational programs conducted by the Council of Chief State School Officers (1987). They also found the level of services to limited English proficient students in vocational education to be minimal. Evidence of interagency collaboration to address the needs of limited English proficient students and of in-service training for staff concerning how to ensure access of limited English proficient students to vocational programs was seldom reported by respondents to the national survey.

Estimating the Needs

Within a year of the publication of Friedenberg's study, another series of reports for the National Assessment of Vocational Education (NAVE), mandated by the Carl D. Perkins Act of 1984, was released by Development Associates, a Washington, DC-based consulting firm. The study's goals were 1) to ascertain the size of the adult limited English proficient population and determine those in need of vocational training and employment-related services, 2) to determine the extent to which vocational training needs are being met, and 3) to make recommendations for future federal policy concerning vocational services for limited English proficient adults. A first report, *Estimates and Projections of the Limited English Proficient Adult Population in Need of Employment Training* (Willette, Haub, & Tordella, 1988), analyzed the 1980 U.S. census data to determine the number and characteristics of limited English proficient adults in the country and to make projections for the years 1990, 1995, and 2000.

The second report, *Case Studies of Vocational Education Services and Policies for Limited English Proficient Adults* (Fleischman, Willette, Hanberry, & Hopstock, 1988) looked at the way in which Perkins Act funding was used to support vocational education for limited English proficient adults in Arizona, California, Florida, Illinois, New York, and Texas. The study examined statewide policy, cooperation, and coordination among Perkins Act-funded projects and other agencies. One large metropolitan area as well as one smaller city or town was selected for in-depth study in each state. The study found that none of the state agencies responsible for education and job-related training had singled out the limited English proficient population as a state-wide priority over other disadvantaged groups for the provision of vocational services.

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For the most part, state agencies had left the identification of priorities to local jurisdictions to meet locally determined needs; the provision of these services was seen as a local concern. Because of reporting criteria, local jurisdictions had no incentive to identify the number of limited English proficient adults in need of services or those receiving services. Decision makers, therefore, did not have accurate information concerning the extent of the need. As in previous studies, these researchers found that few vocational training programs were directed toward limited English proficient adults and that this was especially true of JTPA-funded projects. Problems identified by other studies, such as difficulties in finding bilingual instructors and the lack of staff training, were reiterated by this study. Development Associates recommended to NAVE that a special funding category and monitoring requirements were needed to target limited English proficient adults specifically, but, as we saw in Chapter 2, this recommendation was never implemented into policy.

Studies of Industry-Based Services

Two years later, in 1990, another set of researchers was asked by the Office of Vocational and Adult Education to investigate the status of *industry-based* training programs for limited English proficient adults. The study produced *Industry-Based Bilingual Vocational Training: A Review of Related Literature* (Cichon, Grover, & Thomas, 1990), one of the most comprehensive reviews of literature available to date related to workplace literacy and its relationship to training for non-native speakers of English. In a companion volume, *Industry-Based Bilingual Vocational Training: A Directory of Industry-Based Programs for Limited English Proficient Adults*, authors Thomas and Rhodes (1990) report on their national survey to identify and describe programs around the United States offering various types of training programs for limited English proficient adults. Due to the fragmented nature of the field and the lack of centralized information, the authors found the process of locating programs to be a challenging one. After an exhaustive search involving approximately 700 phone calls and contacts, they were able to identify only 94 industry-based programs directly addressing the needs of limited English proficient adults. About 50% of those programs were in existence because of some form of temporary special funding. Most businesses had formed partnerships with some kind of educational providers, such as a community college, a public school adult program, or a community-based organization. Among the 94 programs, only two offered any kind of technical skills training such as bilingual vocational training. Most training consisted of general or workplace-specific ESL and sometimes adult basic education and was offered to entry-level employees. The study found that the most common types of jobs held by limited English proficient employees in the survey were (in order) factory assembly/production workers, housekeepers/domestics, restaurant service workers, electronics/software workers, food/beverage/meat processor workers, maintenance workers, custodians, textile workers, hospital workers, drivers, and laundry workers.

Contrasting Services in Two Communities

In 1992, a case study (Ramsey & Robyn) was undertaken that looked at just two communities. Conducted under the auspices of RAND's Program on Research on Immigration Policy and of the National Center for Research on Vocational Education, *Preparing Adult Immigrants for Work: The Educational Response in Two Communities* documents a two-year exploratory study of adult immigrant students' experiences

in Miami and Los Angeles. The findings provide insights into how and why educational services differ among schools and programs and what difference that makes to adult immigrant students pursuing education. The report echoes the findings of previous case studies: Most programs followed traditional models of adding or extending ESL classes to additional sites, and few provided vocational training in conjunction with ESL instruction.

Several aspects of the study, however, set it apart from previous ones. First, the contrastive approach comparing two communities illustrated the widely varied needs, funding patterns, and political realities of local districts. For example, in Miami, the first fairly well-to-do wave of educated Cuban refugees established an advocacy force for the less educated population that followed. In Los Angeles, however, at the time of the writing of their report, Ramsey and Robyn (1992) found immigrant issues to be relatively invisible on educational agendas and a lack of political will to move them to the forefront. In California, although the fees for community college enrollment are low, students were expected to take lower-level courses through the adult schools. Miami, on the other hand, maintains extensive noncredit ESL and remedial programs, but charges considerably higher fees that necessitate financial assistance to students. Long waiting lists existed in Los Angeles programs, while in Miami there was more general satisfaction with state funding mechanisms. A second factor that set apart the Ramsey and Robyn study is its inclusion of the perspectives of adult learners enrolled in programs. A series of surveys and focus groups with learners suggested a number of improvements. Students expressed a need for more flexible programs to accommodate those who were employed during the day or worked varied shifts. Vocational classes, they observed, were often offered only during the daytime and ESL classes only at night. In addition, they requested an integration of language and vocational education so they could get better jobs sooner. Other concerns focused on the quality of instruction, shortage of books and materials, and large class sizes that prohibited individualized attention.

Community College Efforts

In 1992, yet another study was commissioned by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE), this time to look at *community college* efforts to increase access for limited English proficient students to college vocational education programs. This project contacted over 100 community colleges in 15 key states, about half of which have special programs and services for limited English proficient vocational students. Nine colleges were selected for more extensive on-site review and cross-site analysis. This study is unique in that, in addition to looking at the extent of services to limited English proficient adults and barriers to their participation, the authors provide many details concerning promising models and strategies employed by the community colleges (Thomas, Bird, & Grover, 1992a). *Serving Vocational ESL Students*, a handbook for community college administrators, was produced as part of the study (Thomas, Bird, & Grover, 1992b). This thorough resource book includes many concrete examples of how community colleges have increased limited English proficient students' access to participation in vocational education and addresses a wide range of topics including multicultural considerations, program design options, models for developing support services, examples of collaboration within colleges and with external agencies, and processes for institutionalizing programs. Many details from this study will be described in Chapter 4.

The study found that, in a climate of limited financial resources, most community colleges struggle to balance the needs of the limited English proficient population with the college's overall mission and goals. The lack of readily available means to determine the demographics of the local area and thus gain a clear picture of the needs of the limited English proficient population in a given locality was a key concern. Colleges also grappled with how to find means to promote acceptance and support for linguistically diverse students on campus. Once on campus, these students, many of whom are the first in their families to attend college and are often unfamiliar with the system, need a variety of support services to succeed. The effectiveness of many programs is not well documented, but it needs to be if programs are to be institutionalized and achieve long-term success.

Studies of Collaboration for Instruction

Another case study that merits particular attention was conducted by Elizabeth Platt (1992). The purpose of her study was to describe the impact of collaboration within schools, particularly between vocational and limited English proficient faculty, on instructional services for limited English proficient students in mainstream vocational classrooms. In conducting the research, she solicited information from vocational programs in three secondary and three postsecondary sites around the United States. The methodology involved conducting week-long visits to the six sites where interviews, classroom observations, and debriefings of teachers and students based on the videotaping of classroom activities took place. The Project in Adult Immigrant Education at the Center for Applied Linguistics has also published a paper by Elizabeth Platt on the same subject, titled *The Vocational Classroom: A Great Place to Learn English* (1996).

Platt found two types of collaboration to exist between vocational and ESL teachers, each one involving a distinct role for the ESL or VESL teacher: the support role and the expert role. Most commonly, VESL teachers played what Platt termed a "supportive role," with the VESL-related goals considered secondary to the needs of the vocational component. VESL instruction was often subsumed by a need to handle communication breakdowns; the need to prepare students for tests; noise; a lack of time; inadequate space; and other conditions. VESL teacher effectiveness, according to Platt "was mediated by a lack of technical expertise, limited access to the hands-on environment, and removal of the vocational vocabulary from its real world context" (Platt, 1992, vii). The presence of the VESL component had little impact on vocational instruction; vocational teachers were not found to make additional efforts to make language comprehensible based on their contact with the VESL colleagues.

In contrasting programs where the ESL staff were seen as specialists and actively shared their expertise with vocational teachers, "the resulting impact was considerable" (Platt, 1992, p. vii). In some cases such collaboration took place as part of curriculum development processes. For example, at one site, language specialists and vocational teachers worked together to analyze the technical information needed for a course and to discuss how to present this information in a more user-friendly way. During this process, vocational instructors became more aware of the importance of comprehensible instructional language and began to make adjustments in their teaching. At another site, vocational teachers were taught directly about language, culture, and language teaching techniques through a staff development course offered by the ESL specialist and were observed to have applied what they learned

to the classroom. Students in these programs were not only learning vocabulary terms but also using them in classroom discourse. Platt found that students in this second category of programs reported significant gains in their confidence and in their ability to comprehend and use English and had strongly positive evaluations of their programs of study. Overall, Platt noted, the deciding factor for quality of vocational instruction for limited English proficient students was not the *existence* of ESL support, but rather the extent to which *vocational* teachers themselves incorporated techniques that facilitated language learning and use in the vocational classroom.

Platt's study was unusual for the field in that it employed a systematic process of inquiry to examine actual instructional practices, the results of which are useful both from a theoretical and a practical standpoint. It demonstrates clearly the potential value of applied research for program improvement.

Dissertation Research

In addition to the commissioned studies listed above, a few doctoral students have also chosen to conduct research related to vocational training for limited English proficient adults. Once again, most fall into the category of surveys or descriptive case studies. Young's (1988) survey of the problems encountered by limited English proficient adults in Orange County, California in seeking and advancing their employment revealed the central role of English in attaining job advancement. Woodruff's (1991) study of Illinois' efforts to serve Hispanic youth and adults in programs supported by the Perkins Act found that while Hispanics enrolled in vocational education at relatively higher rates than other groups in Illinois, *limited English proficient* Hispanics were significantly underrepresented. Pinto-Zavala (1992) chronicled the range of student services being offered to Hispanic students in twelve Illinois community colleges. Harns (1992) used a case study approach to look at the status of vocational training for limited English proficient adults in one county in western Massachusetts. Despite a large and growing population of limited English proficient adults in the county, Harns identified less than 15 limited English proficient adults in the entire county who were enrolled in vocational training. His exhaustive study of practices within the county illustrates the way in which testing is used not to place limited English proficient students but to screen all but the highest level students out of training programs.

Dissertation research also yielded one of the few U.S.-based studies that looked at vocational education for limited English proficient adults from an ethnographic perspective. *Learning to Labor in a New Culture* (Rezabek, 1988) takes an in-depth look at a small group of Southeast Asian refugees receiving vocational ESL and employment training in janitorial services through a Refugee Targeted Assistance Project in California. Working alongside the refugees, Rezabek was able to examine closely communication events that occurred within the program and to observe how communication breakdowns resulted from language and cultural differences as well as from contradictory program goals. Using illustrative life stories of some of the participants, Rezabek showed the human cost of placement priorities that rush participants through a training program of only a few months duration. The stories depict the frustration of refugee adults who, through their experiences with on-the-job training, recognized how their lack of English limited their ability to follow instructions, ask questions regarding their work, and in general do their job well. While they saw the need to complete their course in VESL (and even to

attend further VESL classes if they were to reach their career goals), many were being asked to take jobs before their classes ended. As Rezabek concluded, "The overriding placement orientation of program policy generated an internal contradiction in program objectives that not only set personnel responsible for teaching against those responsible for placement, but also placed refugees in a confusing and frightening middle" (1988, p. 7).

In showing how the refugees used their own cultural experiences to try to negotiate for their needs within the milieu of the program, Rezabek's study does much to illustrate the complex, situational, and multifaceted nature of cultural practices. The study illustrates the subtle ways in which minority adults themselves often are blamed for problems associated with the inaccessibility or poor quality of programs. The insights provided by the study do much to demonstrate the potential value of ethnographic research within the field.

Studies of the Linguistic Demands of the Workplace

Another important arena, where it might be assumed that a body of research exists to inform those offering language and vocational training to limited English proficient adults, has to do with understanding the linguistic tasks demanded of workers on the job. In fact, as Grognet (1995) points out, there exists no corpus of knowledge in the country that through serious ethnographic research charts worker-to-worker, worker-to-supervisor, supervisor-to-worker, and worker-to-manager communication in any occupational cluster. Although research concerning the literacy demands and practices of native speakers of English is somewhat useful, the workplace-related literacy demands on non-native speakers require specialized study. Not only must non-native speakers develop and use literacy skills and speak and understand English, but they must also develop sophisticated levels of cross-cultural understanding. This section briefly touches upon a few key studies that may be relevant to the development of this field of study.

Studies of the Literacy Needs of Native Speakers of English

Among the first studies of the relationship between literacy and job performance were those conducted by Sticht (1975) in the context of preparing soldiers for military occupations. Further studies by Diehl and Mikulecky (1980), who looked at as many as 100 occupations in 26 different workplaces, revealed that a significant part of most workdays involves reading. This is true not only for white collar jobs but for most entry-level jobs as well. The kind of reading, however, is different from that learned in school. It is "reading to do" instead of "reading to learn" (Mikulecky & Ehlinger, 1987). Workers must read memos, letters, written instructions, short reports, order forms, invoices, blueprints, parts lists with prices, catalogs, manuals, and policy materials. Much of this reading is repetitive (checking prices in a parts list, for example) and contextualized to experiences and knowledge a worker already has. In fact, when these researchers administered general reading tests along with job-related reading tests, they consistently found that workers could read job-related materials at a level at least two grades higher than the general reading materials. In other words, "factors other than general literacy affect workers' skills at reading on the job" (Center for Literacy Studies, 1992, p. A-30).

Studies of Problem Solving at Work

Another body of research of interest in this area concerns the work of cognitive psychologists who have looked at learning outside the realm of formal instruction. When Scribner and her colleagues (1984; 1986) conducted systematic observations of how workers solved problems at a milk processing plant, they discovered that these workers often found creative ways to solve problems that went beyond the constraints of the text itself. To fill written orders for milk, for example, workers found ways to satisfy the order in the fewest possible moves. Even though they were not literally following the instructions, experienced workers made few mistakes. New workers, who followed instructions more literally, in contrast, often made more mistakes or took more time to complete the orders. Everyday people, Scribner found, were continually exercising creative problem solving as they went about seemingly routine tasks. These same people, when given pencil and paper mathematics tests, made many errors on problems similar to those they were able to solve easily on the job.

Overall, the findings of these two groups of researchers show that literacy skill is only one factor in job performance. "Metacognitive" skills—the ability to think through what is needed and apply reading and writing to the task—account for much of an individual's success in job performance (Center for Literacy Studies, 1992, p. A-34). Clearly, the importance of applying studies of this nature to the work performance of non-native speakers is obvious. Such studies might, among other goals, have important implications concerning the current practice of requiring relatively high reading levels on academic reading tests as a single criteria for entrance into job training.

Needs Assessments of Non-Native English Speakers' Language Usage on the Job

Much of the field's existing understanding of the language and cultural demands for non-native speakers of English on the job have come from adult educators who have conducted relatively small, informal studies to assist in program planning, rather than from ethnographers or other university-based researchers. The nature of these literacy audits and needs analyses will be described in more detail in the next two chapters. A few practitioners have had the opportunity to collect and analyze their findings. Gage and Prince (1982), for example, interviewed supervisors at 30 businesses in the state of Washington to determine their perception of the language needs of limited English proficient workers. Latkiewicz (1983) surveyed personnel managers and supervisors in Utah regarding their perceptions and requirements for Indochinese workers. Cangampang and Tsang (1988) also looked at the language needs of entry-level jobs in the manufacturing and service sectors in California. Becker, Karimer, and Mrowicki (1986) surveyed 52 employers in the Chicago area, asking them to rate communication problems on the job for their refugee employees. The 6 language-related factors she describes are illustrative of employers' perceptions of the needs:

1. Failure to ask when something is not understood (78% rated this as a greater than average problem);
2. Ability to understand company policy (65%);
3. Ability to report problems on the job (63%);
4. Following directions (54%);
5. Obeying safety regulations (45%); and
6. Relationships with other employees (13%).

Another needs assessment was conducted in 1984, by Svedsen and Krebs in connection with the planning for an on-site Bilingual Vocational Training Program sponsored by Metropolitan State College in Denver, Colorado. For 6 to 9 hours a week for the first 3 to 4 weeks of a 12-week course, program planners observed the language use of workers in 2 health-care occupations: that of a central supply technician and a hospital transporter. They tape recorded typical dialogues among workers at the site, interviewed staff at all levels, and made thorough observations of the job including environmental details such as noise levels, the proximity of workers to each other, the amount of movement about the department, and the communicative patterns among workers. In addition, they collected samples of written forms, procedures, and departmental training materials. The authors observed that many of their assumptions about the language a worker would need did not hold up in their on-site analysis. For example, they found that even entry-level workers need an explanation of why certain tasks are done in order to perform them well. As their responsibility increases, they need to know what to do when routines are interrupted, such as when an item cannot be found or a machine does not work. Language used to socialize with co-workers, they observed, was also very important.

British Studies

The work of many U.S.-based practitioners in the late seventies and early eighties was aided by a British study by T.C. Jupp and Susan Hodlin, *An Example of Theory and Practice in Functional Language Teaching for Elementary Learners*, published in 1975. Their book provided a systematic approach to functional language teaching in the workplace, based on the authors' experiences setting up an experimental workplace English language training program for Asian employees. (This project became the forerunner of the National Center for Industrial Language Training in England.) This pioneering work was among the first to lay out an extensive repertoire of key language and cultural functions required on the job. Many U.S. practitioners drew on this compendium to select language functions to address in their own curricula. Examples of such curricula will be described in more detail in Chapter 4.

Over the past twenty years, the Industrial Language Training Service has continued to investigate issues related to language in the workplace. In 1992, Roberts, along with Jupp and Davies, released another volume entitled *Language and Discrimination* based on many more years of research, including in-depth ethnographic and linguistic analyses of workplace settings. The work of these authors over time has led them to observe more clearly the way in which language functions as a means of indirect racial discrimination. Language, culture, and meaning, the researchers argue, are inseparably interwoven. A close analysis of countless transcripts of language interactions on the job has brought to the surface the many subtle realities related to unequal power relationships in multicultural workplaces. This work, which appears to be less well known in this country, deserves the careful attention of prospective U.S. workplace researchers.

The Importance of Further Research

Years of experience conducting needs assessments or literacy audits within various occupations has allowed experienced educators to identify many language functions that appear to cut across occupational domains. Among those commonly mentioned are *social interactional skills* such as greetings and farewells, meeting people at work, engaging in small talk with co-workers, and addressing supervisors; *skills related to job performance* such as responding

to instructions, asking for clarification, making requests, observing safety rules, and identifying tools, equipment, and processes; *skills related to increased responsibility* such as being able to give as well as follow directions, participating in group discussions, carrying and writing messages, initiating conversations, and making suggestions; and *skills related to procedures on the job* such as reading a paycheck, asking about holidays, sick leave, and fringe benefits, and discussing grievances (Grognet, 1995).

Key Trends in Adult Second Language Instruction

Other areas where research over the last twenty years has aided the field in understanding how to improve vocational instruction for limited English proficient adults include second language acquisition and approaches to language and literacy instruction.

Traditionally, ESL for adults has often been allied with other types of adult basic education services. During the late seventies, the awareness grew among adult educators that "ESL is more than adult basic education with a foreign accent" (Wrigley & Ewen, 1995, p. 15). The fact that ESL contains an entire domain of core skills, including speaking and listening in addition to reading and writing, became better recognized. Adult educators began to acknowledge that competence in ESL included a complex array of interpersonal, linguistic, and cultural elements, and thus the skills of teachers as well as the curricula, program design, and many other aspects of ESL instruction must be very different from those found in ABE.

New Approaches to Instruction

The needs of refugees and immigrants entering the adult educational system in the late 1970s forced language educators to re-examine their approaches to instruction. Models of ESL introduced in the 1940s and 1950s by Fries (1945) and others had stressed the systematic learning of formal language structures established through the use of repetition and drills. A series of grammatical concepts often shaped the sequence of instruction. Although in many circles (particularly in academic settings) variations of this method have remained popular, adult educators began to recognize its inappropriateness for instructing adults who must quickly begin to learn enough English to survive in the United States, both on the job and in their everyday lives. Many could ill afford to study English as a separate subject for an extensive period of time. General ESL programs began to explore a "communicative competency" approach wherein the development of purposeful communication, focusing on what learners can *do* with language, became the core around which the curriculum was developed. Competency-based instruction stressed such topics as finding housing, reading want ads, reporting medical problems, and using public transportation (Center for Applied Linguistics, 1983).

Over the succeeding years, as Platt (1992) points out, the field has been influenced by more cognitive and communicative approaches to instruction. But even though teaching ESL has become more realistic, more student centered, and more function oriented, there remains no uniform vision across the profession. Communicative language teaching promoted by Savignon (1972) and Canale and Swain (1980), the Natural Approach introduced by Krashen & Terrell (1983), and participatory education associated with Freire (1970), along with the work of many other linguists and language educators, have influenced the field. More recent approaches stress the development of language skills compatible with concept learning, including content-based in-

struction (Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 1989; Crandall, 1995; Crandall & Tucker, 1990) and English for Specific Purposes (Swales, 1985). The focus of ESL instruction differs not only depending on the teaching approach (or combination of approaches) employed by the teacher but also on the context, whether it be survival ESL and ESL literacy for new arrivals attending a community-based organization, English for academic purposes for incoming college students, English for science and technology professionals, or workplace ESL for persons already employed.

New Understandings of Language Proficiency

In recent years, understanding of the complexity of language proficiency and the length of time required to become proficient has also improved. Studies by Cummins (1981) and Collier (1992) with school-aged populations have shown that language-minority students may acquire social language (what Cummins calls basic interpersonal communication skills) in as little as one or two years. To develop the academic language proficiency (cognitive academic language proficiency) to participate in classes where English is the medium of instruction, however, may take as long as five to seven years.

Such findings have had important implications for the development of vocational training programs for immigrants. One response from programs has been to begin to offer vocational ESL along a continuum. Adults may begin with basic survival ESL and then move into prevocational, cluster VESL or VESL bridging courses that allow them to begin to work toward their vocational goals while still focusing intensively on language development, before then enrolling in occupation-specific training. Programs preparing adults to enter more academically oriented vocational training at the college level have also begun to offer pre-academic programs, specifically designed to prepare adults for academic study and to allow them to gain practice in test taking.

Getting Beyond Stating the Problem

As the examples above make clear, with a few exceptions, twenty years of research specifically directed toward the vocational and workplace training needs of immigrant adults has taken only a few steps beyond simply stating the problem. Research in the field has been fraught with duplication of effort (Friedenberg, 1993). Studies that might document program effectiveness have not been undertaken, even within the Bilingual Vocational Training Program, which has been in existence for nearly two decades. Although the intention to dedicate as much financial support as possible to direct services is commendable on one level, on another, the lack of attention to understanding better what works and why has been a limitation within the field.

Clearly, the development of rigorous and well-designed studies within the field of adult education presents many conceptual and logistical challenges. Tracking students' employment success over time, for example, would be costly and difficult. The lack of uniform standards for specific practices and activities such as hours of instruction, teacher credentials, and student-teacher ratios would make comparisons between programs problematic. Identifying appropriate assessment tools continues to be a serious concern. Ethnographic and other qualitative studies of language and cultural interaction in the workplace can also be costly and present research design challenges. Nevertheless, without such studies, the

prospects for serious program improvement remain dim. Moreover, in a climate of fiscal constraint, funders may be unwilling to continue projects unless some form of tangible proof of the return they receive on investment (ROI) is available.

This chapter has highlighted many kinds of studies that might be undertaken. Among them are the following:

- Ethnographic research to understand better the linguistic and cultural demands placed upon limited English proficient adults in workplace settings;
- Discourse analysis to determine worker-to-worker, worker-to-supervisor, supervisor-to-worker, and worker-to-manager communication in various occupational clusters;
- Studies to determine the relationship between language, literacy, and job performance;
- Research to ascertain outcomes of instruction on job performance, including the short- and long-term impact of instruction; and
- Studies to examine the effectiveness of various models of vocational and workplace instruction.

Can this nation afford the costs of such additional research studies? As immigrants come to occupy a greater and greater role in the U.S. workforce, the real question may be whether or not it can afford *not* to conduct them.

Chapter Four

Vocational Education for Adult Immigrants: What Works?

Vocational education services to limited English proficient adults remain varied and multifaceted, responding to a variety of learner needs, local contexts, and financial capacities. Across the nation there exist no uniform standards or models, although, as this chapter will show, in recent years much more has been learned about what works and what elements are essential for program success. Throughout much of this paper so far, the focus has been on the problems: the lack of funding, the fragmentation, and the limited research base. And yet, to focus solely on these concerns would not do justice to the many dedicated educators who, despite significant constraints, continue to experiment to find better instructional models, more integrated support services, and more effective and cost-efficient ways to train adults for skilled and semi-skilled employment. Much can be learned from their hard work and vision.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the various components of vocational education for limited English proficient adults, with an eye to the many unsung success stories that can provide models for the future. The chapter begins with a discussion of general program designs for integrating language and vocational training. Then, the various components that go into planning vocational and language training for limited English proficient adults will each be considered in turn. They include:

1. Determining the need for services;
2. Developing institutional support;
3. Doing outreach, recruitment, and intake;
4. Developing multicultural awareness;
5. Developing the instructional component;
6. Providing support services;
7. Staffing and offering staff development; and
8. Evaluating programs.

Within each section are boxes with illustrative examples from programs around the country.

Program Design

The design of programs varies considerably. As shown in Figure 4-1, some programs may utilize a single agency approach with all educational and support services under the same umbrella. Others may take a multiple agency approach with intake and assessment at one site, instruction at another, employment services at a third, and support services at yet another. As shown in Figure 4-2, educational services may take place in community-based organizations, vocational centers connected with local education agencies, community colleges, proprietary schools, or other sites. These services may or may not include a work experience component in

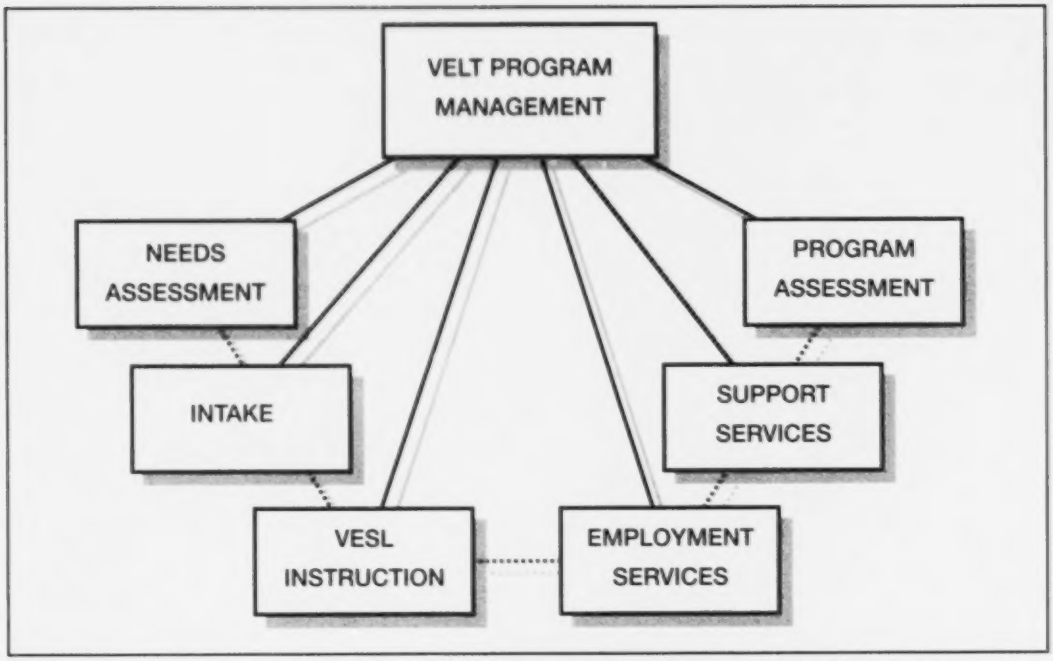


Figure 4-1 **Single Agency Approach: VELT Program Management**
From Grover, J., & Mrowicki, L. (1985). *Vocational English Language Training Resource Package*, p.2-2. Falls Church, VA: Resource Management Corporation.

private industry. Ideally, programs provide important support services such as culturally appropriate recruitment; career awareness counseling; help with individuals' social, economic, and psychological needs; assistance in locating transportation and childcare; and assistance with job placement. Optimally, they also offer services at varying hours of the day and on adjustable schedules to accommodate working students.

Programs also differ in the amount of time spent on ESL and vocational training, the order in which they are pursued, and the amount of support provided in the first language. Programs generally offer one of two kinds of training: short- or long-term. *Short-term training programs* usually last from a few weeks to several months and are designed to move adults quickly into employment. These kinds of programs may be offered as noncredit programs by community colleges or community-based organizations. They are also the most common kinds of programs available through the JTPA- or JOBS-funded training programs for limited English proficient participants or through the Targeted Assistance Programs for recent refugees. In a few larger vocational programs and community colleges, efforts are being made to connect short- and long-term training. Students who must balance the need for immediate employment with the lengths and costs of degree programs may begin with a short-term training program—in light auto mechanics, for example. Before completing the program, they are given an orientation to degree programs leading to auto mechanics certification and encouraged to come back for the degree program after they have gained some experience on the job.

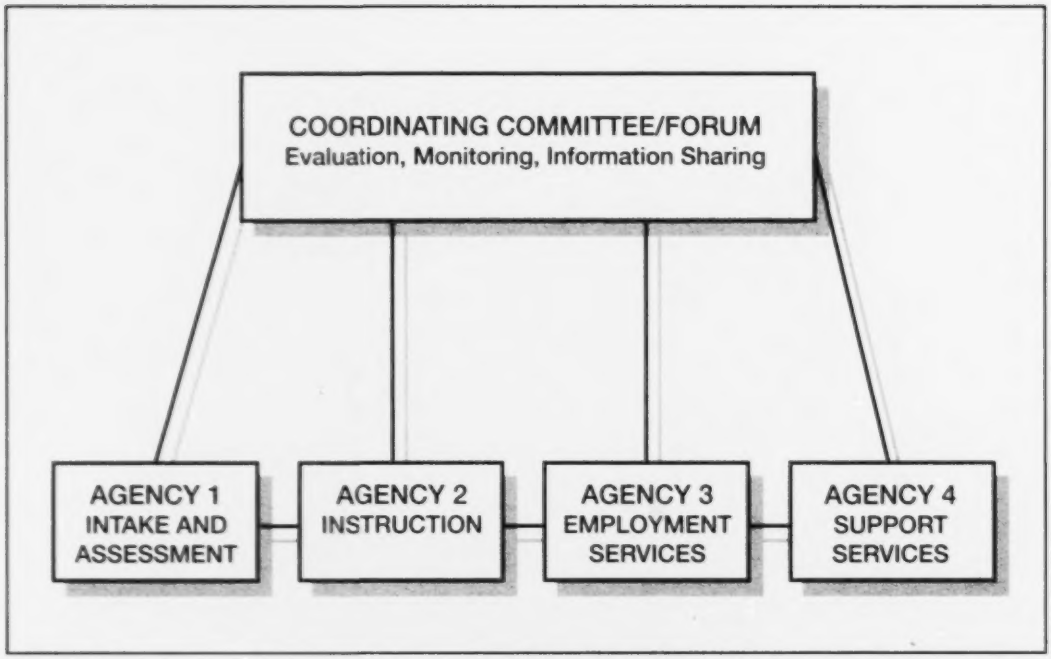


Figure 4-2 **Multiple Agency Approach: VELT Program Management**

From Grover, J., & Mrowicki, L. (1985). *Vocational English Language Training Resource Package*, p.2-3. Falls Church, VA: Resource Management Corporation.

A Short-Term Training Program — Box 4A

The San Diego Community College has a vocational ESL/ABE office skills program that uses the learning lab approach. Low-level ESL students begin with a three-week preliminary VESL lab before going to the office skills lab. In the office skills lab for three hours a day students work on computers and learn office-related vocabulary, beginning keyboarding, and word processing skills. The lab is run like a workplace; attendance is required, work must be done each day before leaving, the instructor provides feedback daily, and students work together to solve problems. Students stay in the program until they demonstrate exit competencies or get a job (Thomas, Bird & Grover, 1992b, p. 34).

Long-term training programs may require anywhere from two to four semesters and several hundred hours of study. Most often they lead to certification in a vocational field or to an associate's degree. The primary focus of these programs is not on job placement but on increasing students' technical and vocationally related language skills to allow them to qualify for a trade or semi-skilled profession. Sometimes programs also offer options to allow students to continue on to a 4-year program leading to a professional degree. The requirements for entry into these programs may also be higher than those required for entry into

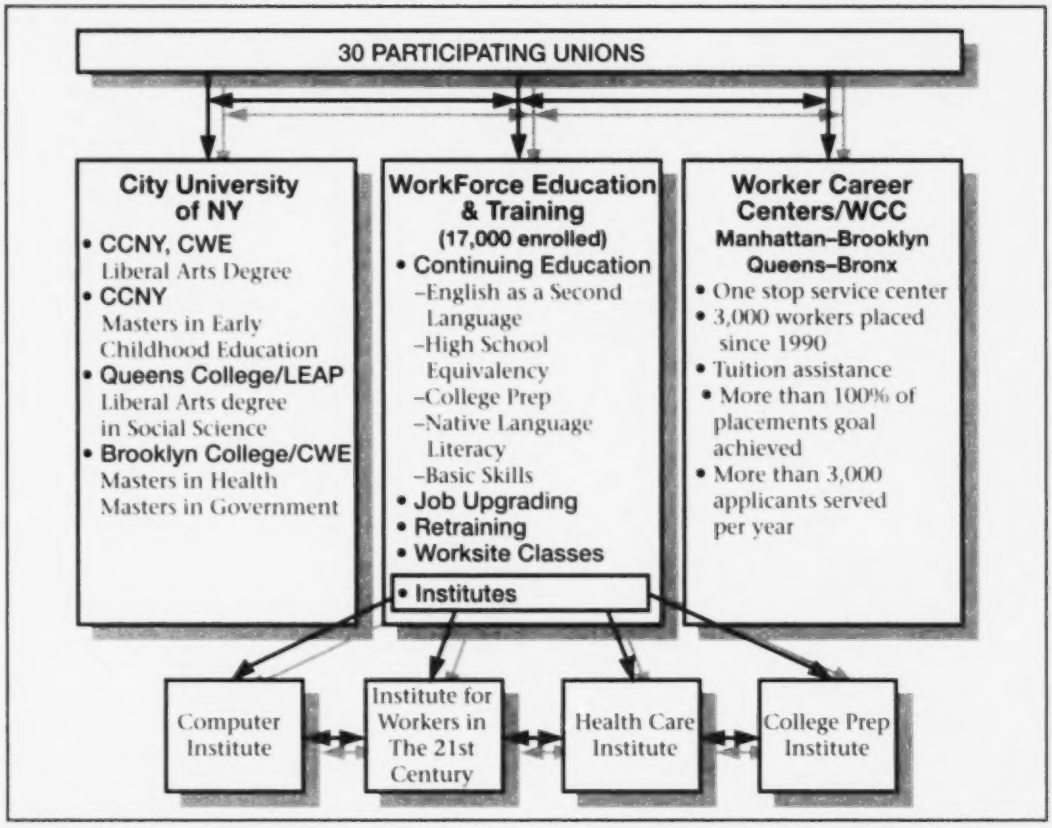


Figure 4-3 **Consortium for Worker Education: Who We Are**

Reprinted with permission from Consortium for Worker Education. (1995). *Who We Are* (brochure). New York, NY: Author.

A Long-Term Job Training Program — Box 4B

The Consortium for Worker Education (CWE) is a not-for-profit, community-based organization comprised of the education departments of its 30 member labor unions. The CWE provides education and training for over 17,000 union members and their families yearly. Within CWE programs, it is possible for a worker to begin instruction in ESL and progress through GED programs to college courses or technical and certificate programs. The CWE Medical Assistant Training is one example. For certification, a 400-hour program is required and a built-in externship is also part of the training program. For those who choose to continue their education, the College Preparation for Health Care Workers Reading and Writing Curriculum simultaneously prepares students for the college entrance exams they will need to take and for the kinds of texts they will be using in college-level courses related to health. A companion GED College Prep Mathematics Health Care Curriculum is also offered (Consortium for Worker Education, 1994).

short-term training. In some cases, students must have a high school diploma or GED; in others, they may have to pass certain English language proficiency or basic skills tests. Although there do exist successful models for allowing even beginning-level students to start long-term vocational training while they are learning English and basic skills, these are still not widely available. Examples of these kinds of programs will be discussed later in this chapter. Figure 4-3 illustrates the vocational training programs offered by the Consortium for Worker Education.

Models for Integrating Language and Vocational Training

A key consideration in program design is the way in which language and vocational training will be integrated or sequenced. Over the years, a number of authors have developed various schemes for categorizing the models of vocational training. In 1979, Crandall presented several models along a continuum from those farthest removed from the job to those closest to the job. These included

1. Prevocational ESL;
2. Vocational ESL along with vocational training;
3. Bilingual-vocational training; and
4. ESL and on-the-job training.

In *Approaches to Employment Related Training for Adults Who Are Limited English Proficient* (1984), Nick Kremer presented a classification system that addressed a broad diversity of service delivery models. They included:

1. General or prevocational ESL followed by regular vocational education;
2. General or prevocational ESL along with regular vocational education;
3. Job site VESL along with on-the-job training;
4. Job site VESL along with on-the-job training with interpreters;
5. General or prevocational ESL along with bilingual vocational education;
6. VESL along with bilingual vocational education; and
7. Job site VESL along with bilingual on-the-job training.

Jeanne Lopez-Valadez (Northern Illinois University, Office of Applied Innovations, 1994b) and Franklin (1995) propose another framework, consisting of four models. The first, which they term the *supplementation model*, provides vocational training only after students have achieved a high level of English proficiency. The *transition model* provides various kinds of courses that serve as a transition between ESL and vocational training. The *concurrent model* provides for simultaneous and mutually reinforcing vocational ESL and vocational training. Finally, the *bilingual vocational training model* represents a comprehensive framework that integrates English bilingual vocational instruction, VESL, and a range of supportive services, with close coordination among the components. Another schema is proposed by Wrigley, Chisman, and Ewen in *Sparks of Excellence* (1993). They categorize the various models into three broad groups:

1. *Sequential Models* that provide ESL or various kinds of VESL classes before attending training;
2. *Concurrent Models* that offer skills training part of the day and ESL classes to support the skills training another part of the day; and
3. *Integrated Models* that combine skills training and language training in one course.

Other models have been proposed by Friedenberg (1985), Belcher & Warmbrod (1987), and Fleischman (1988).

No schema can take into account the many variations that exist in the field. In developing the one to use in this study, the work of Lopez-Valadez (Northern Illinois University, Office of Applied Innovations, 1994b) and Wrigley, Chisman, and Ewen (1993) was used extensively. What follows is a short description of each of the models listed and outlined below, including their strengths and disadvantages, and examples from programs that utilize each model.

1. The Sequential Model
   a. for Pre-Employment Training
   b. for Pre-Vocational Training
2. The Transitional Model
3. The Concurrent Model
4. Bilingual Vocational Training

The Sequential Model: Pre-Employment Training

In the sequential model, depicted in Figure 4-4, courses follow a clear sequence beginning with ESL. Only after a certain level of English proficiency is acquired do students move on to the next level, whether it is a job or vocational training. The pre-employment version of this model is most often offered as part of a short-term training program for beginning- or intermediate-level ESL students. It is designed to stress survival-level English and the vocational language and cultural orientation needed to get and keep an entry-level job. Students may or may not be expected to take some beginning-level ESL before enrolling in the pre-employment class. Most often, students with various career interests may be enrolled in the class, so the topics covered must be general in nature. They may include the language of job applications and want ads; how to conduct oneself during a job interview; health and safety on the job; information related to fringe benefits, sick leave, time cards, insurance, and social security; cultural expectations of U.S. employers; and general language needed to perform most entry-level jobs. Programs vary in the extent to which they offer support services, such as those to help students make career choices or get assistance with job placement. They may be more or less tailored to local employment conditions. Some programs may visit job sites or include visits by outside speakers from business and industry.

This sequential model was fairly prevalent in the early 1980s for training refugees entering the country in the second wave of immigration from Southeast Asia. Community-based organizations, such as Lutheran Social Services or Catholic Charities, received money from states to provide basic ESL services to refugees to make them eligible for vocational training or to move them directly into entry-level jobs. To a large degree, this type of training was phased out when the U.S. Department of State shifted its funding to support general pre-employment training in both language and cultural orientation—training that would occur *before* the immigrants came to the United States in the refugee processing centers in the Philippines, Thailand, and Indonesia.

Strengths:

- General pre-employment topics may be applicable to students with a variety of career interests.
- This type of programming assists students with the basics to allow them to get a job after a short training period.
- This basic, often stand-alone program can easily be implemented within many educational settings.

Disadvantages:

- Training time is often too short to allow students to acquire the language and cultural skills they need on the job.
- Students are commonly prepared only for low-wage, entry-level jobs requiring few skills.
- Support services to assist students to choose a career area consistent with their previous experience and interests and to find a job may be limited.

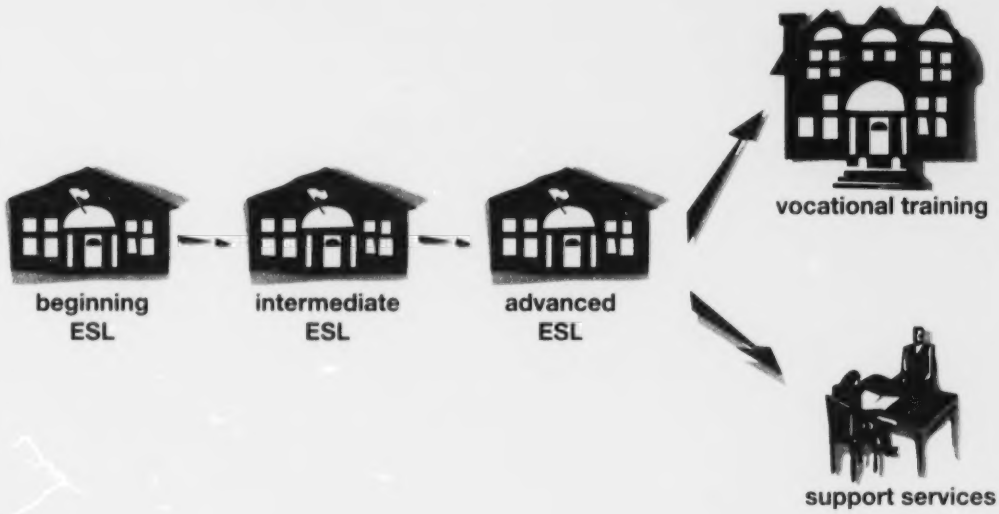
Figure 4-4 **The Sequential Model: Pre-Employment Training**

The Sequential Model: Pre-Vocational Training

Within this model, depicted in Figure 4-5, students must enroll in general ESL classes for several semesters before entering a mainstream vocational training program. The ESL classes may be competency based, grammar based or, especially if they are located in community colleges, may focus on academic ESL. These programs operate on the premise that LEP students must have a high level of general English competency before they can benefit from vocational training programs. Typically, the onus for finding out about existing vocational programs is on the students. ESL teachers may or may not have information about entry requirements for vocational training or programs available in the community. Once LEP students are enrolled in vocational training, programs may offer them some support outside the classroom, such as tutors or learning labs to supplement their course work, bilingual counseling, and other services.

A Sequential, Pre-Vocational Training Program — Box 4C

Until recently, ESL services on Cape Cod, Massachusetts, were provided to beginning-level students through the Cape Cod Literacy Council and the Barnstable Community Schools. Cape Cod Community College offered only one advanced ESL class (a credit course) and had no learning lab support or special services for LEP students. There was little communication between the services; the transition from the community-based programs to community college vocational programs represented a broad chasm for students to cross. As part of the Massachusetts English Language Development (MELD) project, the program has worked to provide a progression of ESL instruction from beginning to advanced levels to allow students to progress to the mainstream community college. Intermediate level classes are now offered at a new college adult learning center and an advanced-level ESL college-credit course is available (Kirkman, 1993).



Strengths:

- This model requires little from community colleges or vocational programs. They do not have to adapt their vocational program to meet the needs of LEP students.
- Students who are able to continue through several semesters of English may achieve a high level of proficiency.
- Students with varied career interests can attend the same classes.

Disadvantages:

- This model serves to exclude LEP students from vocational education. Most adult students must drop out of ESL to get jobs before reaching the level required to pass entry tests.
- The language taught in ESL classes may not prepare students for the language demands of vocational training courses.
- Most programs offer little information to help students locate and enroll in vocational training. There is no articulation to facilitate the transition from ESL to vocational training.
- Since the time required to complete both ESL and vocational training is lengthy, overall completion of a program through this model can be costly.

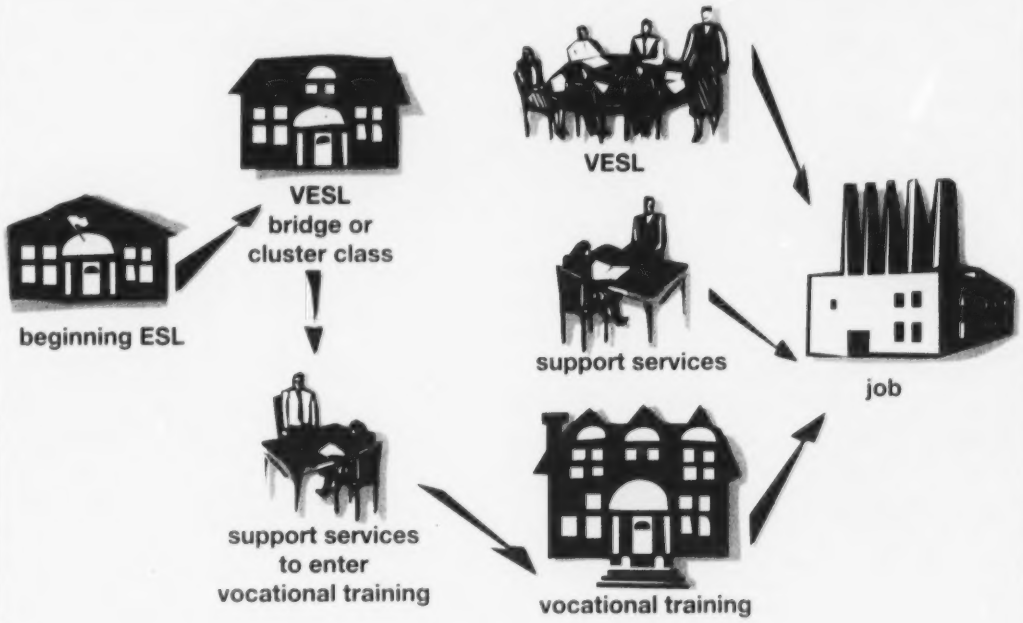
Figure 4-5 **The Sequential Model: Pre-Vocational Training**

The Transitional Model: Pre-Vocational Programs with a Bridging Component

Responding to concerns regarding the drawbacks of the sequential model for pre-vocational students, a number of programs have begun to develop courses that bridge the gap between ESL courses and mainstream vocational training. Generally, bridging or transition courses are offered to intermediate-level ESL students. These courses focus either on a specific career or a cluster of careers in a common field. The courses may be primarily concerned with the vocationally related language needed for vocational training in a given area, or they may be more content centered, allowing students to learn basic concepts, such as prerequisite science and math needed in health professions or basic information about human development needed to work in early childhood education. Some curricula allow students to explore their career interests while learning English. Vocational instructors may be invited to speak to the class and vocational texts may be used as reading materials. Ideally such a course is developed in close collaboration with vocational instructors who know the kind of preparation students need to succeed in their classes. Various kinds of VESL support also continue once the student is enrolled in vocational training. In some community colleges, vocational credit is offered for these classes. In other cases, standardized entrance requirements to vocational training may be waived for students who have demonstrated, through successful completion of the course, that they are ready for vocational training. The transitional model is depicted in Figure 4-6.

A Sequential, Pre-Vocational Bridging Program — Box 4D

In 1991, instructors at Center City/Skills Centre of the San Diego Community College District decided to establish the VESL Bridging Project to meet the needs of adult students wishing to enroll in auto mechanics, electronics test technician, machine shop, and welding programs. The bridging classes teach ESL, using job-related terminology and concepts from the different vocational fields. The VESL project established an advisory committee composed of representatives from the automotive, electronics, and metalworking industries; vocational and ESL education; and members of the Latino and Indochinese communities to assist in planning. They developed a specialized placement plan and an assessment process to gauge when students have mastered vocation-specific language, reading, and math. Recently, they published a report containing many samples of the assessment tools and curriculum materials they have developed (San Diego Community College District, 1995).



Strengths:

- Students' motivation improves when they see they are working toward their career goals while enrolled in vocationally oriented ESL programs.
- Students learn English and pre-vocational content related to the demands of future vocational training.
- Instructors are specially trained to assist students in making the transition to vocational training.
- Students complete the sequence of ESL and vocational instruction more quickly, which, in turn, is more cost effective.

Disadvantages:

- Specialized curriculum materials for bridging courses must be prepared; few curriculum models currently exist.
- Information must be coordinated between VESL and vocational training components.
- This program requires a large enough student population that classes within one skill area or cluster of areas can be formed.

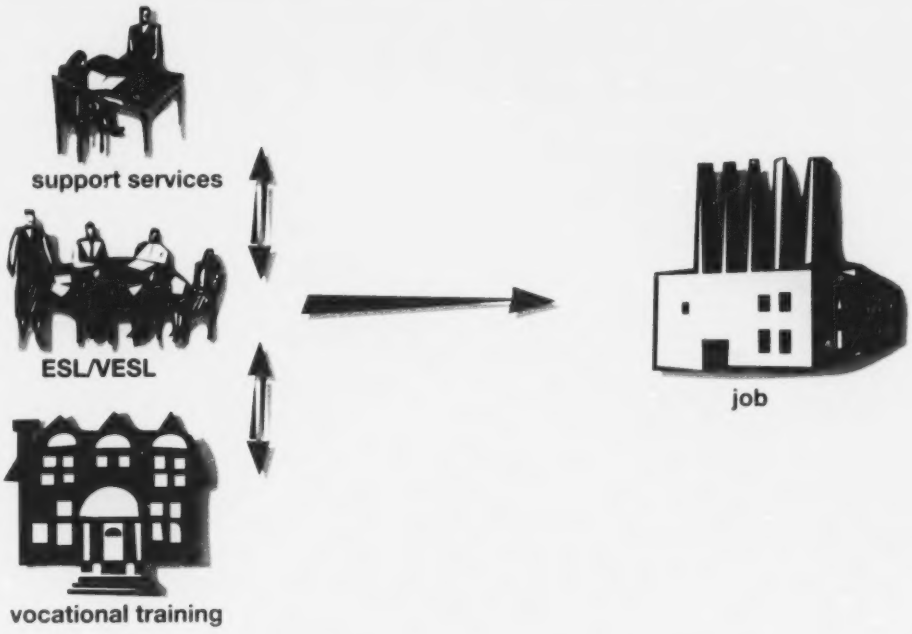
Figure 4-6 **The Transitional Model**

The Concurrent Model

Concurrent models allow students to start learning vocational concepts from their first day of training. Often, concurrent programs are part of comprehensive day-long programs. Students may attend occupation-specific VESL in the morning and receive vocational training and/or a lab class in the afternoon. In the best of all worlds, the VESL classes and vocational classes are mutually reinforcing. Assignments are coordinated so language concepts that are first introduced in the VESL class can be practiced in the vocational class. Students who do not understand various kinds of information covered in vocational training can bring those questions back to the VESL class where they can be addressed in more detail. Although this approach has many obvious strengths in allowing students to get right into vocational training and to complete a program more quickly, it requires a good deal of planning, regular coordination (often weekly meetings with joint staff), and prior training on the part of instructors. Vocational instructors need to learn how to work with LEP students in the classroom. Bilingual peer tutors in the vocational classroom may provide assistance. VESL teachers visit the vocational training classes and observe employees on the job in order to learn the content area being taught and the language and cultural demands students will face once they are employed. Ideally, a range of support services is also available to students. The concurrent model is depicted in Figure 4-7.

A Concurrent Program — Box 4E

The VESL Office Training Program at San Francisco Community College District's Chinatown/North Beach Center uses a concurrent model. The program takes three semesters to complete. Students begin with ESL and then take four core courses: clerical keyboarding, clerical VESL, social communicating, and computer skills. A fifth course, accounting, is optional. The clerical VESL course is taught concurrently with the keyboarding course. The computer skills instructor is also an experienced VESL instructor, so she often integrates computer skills with related language instruction. Instructors work with local companies to do a needs assessment for program development. The instructors meet weekly to coordinate classes (Thomas, Bird, & Grover, 1992a).



Strengths:

- Students can begin attending vocational training right away, while they improve their ESL skills.
- The VESL and vocational training courses complement and reinforce one another. Vocational education and lab courses provide an ideal natural laboratory for practicing language skills; thus accelerating learning.
- Students can complete training and get into skilled jobs more quickly, in some cases lowering the cost of overall training.

Disadvantages:

- To work well, close coordination between the VESL and vocational instructor is essential; additional time is required up front for curriculum development and during the course for regular planning meetings.
- Vocational instructors may need additional training in how to adapt instruction to the needs of LEP students. ESL instructors need to learn vocational content and specialized methods for teaching VESL.
- Development of concurrent programs requires an institutional commitment to accommodate the special needs of LEP students.

Figure 4-7 **The Concurrent Model**

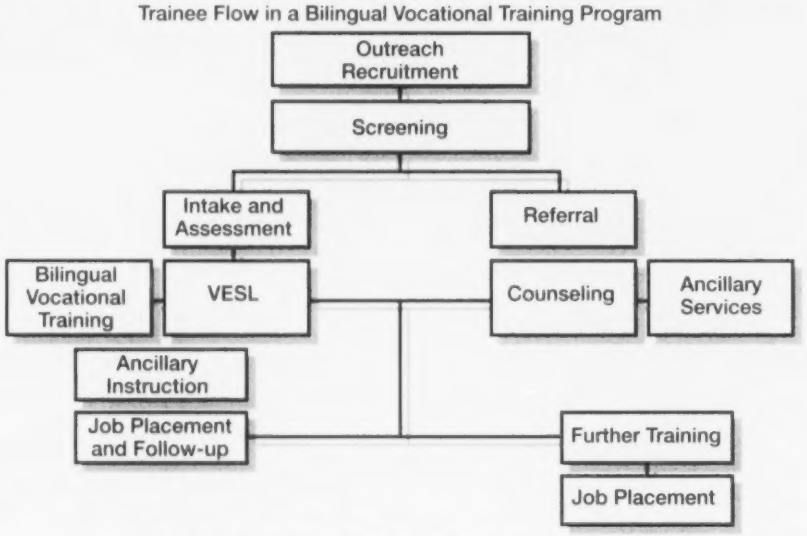
The Bilingual Vocational Training Model

Among the various models, the bilingual vocational training (BVT) model is the one that has emerged with the most comprehensive and clearly defined set of objectives and characteristics. As was discussed in Chapter 2, bilingual vocational instruction was developed as a result of a special funding category designated in 1976 as part of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act. BVT programs can take place in a variety of settings, including community colleges, vocational training programs, community-based organizations, and other sites. Over the years, approximately ten programs per year have been funded around the country; many of them have been refunded for several years or have been continued by the host program after the federal funding ended. In addition to monies to operate programs, a small amount of funding has also been made available to develop materials and methods for the programs and to train instructors in the methods.

The BVT model is based around seven key components that which ideally should be incorporated into every program (although, in fact, portions of the model are frequently adapted for use in various settings). Laura Franklin (1995), a BVT instructor trainer, describes the general characteristics of each component. *Recruitment*, she says, emphasizes not only accommodating those students who are already in the general student population, but also actively seeking new students. *Intake and assessment* of new students should utilize both English and the native language for testing of oral ability, reading and writing in both languages, as well as for vocational interests and aptitudes. *Adapted vocational instruction* incorporates both the students' native languages as well as English. Texts may be directly translated into the required languages, bilingual materials can be used to supplement existing materials, and bilingual aides, tutors, or volunteers can be used. *Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL)* teaches language using vocation-related content. *Counseling and support services* are specifically oriented toward the needs of the LEP student and specifically help students to learn about cultural issues that will impact on job success. *Job development and placement* activities are also uniquely geared to the LEP student. Finally, according to Franklin, *coordination of BVT components* is essential. This includes both regular dialogue among VESL instructors, vocational instructors, and support staff and inservice training to ensure that all staff understand the program goals and policies. The BVT model is depicted in Figure 4-8.

A Bilingual Vocational Training Program — Box 4F

The Employment Training Center in Arlington, Virginia, operates Bilingual Vocational Training (BVT) in four occupational fields: Early Childhood, Office Skills, Electrical Trades, and Printing. Each skill area has an instructional team that meets weekly to work on lesson plans and discuss student progress. Training courses are conducted on an open-entry/open-exit basis and are competency based. BVT staff prepare an individual service strategy for each trainee. Each trainee receives an average of 15 hours of job skills training and 15 hours of vocational ESL each week. In the beginning, trainees may spend more time in vocational ESL; as their English language skills improve, more time is devoted to job skills training. Vocational training classes are conducted primarily in English. However, if trainees have questions, they ask the bilingual aide for explanations in the native language. If there are several trainees who need help, the bilingual aide offers a parallel lesson in the native language to facilitate a thorough comprehension of the concept. In the Printing and Early Childhood courses, trainees participate in an on-the-job practicum. Completion of the training, regardless of the time of entry, is determined by a demonstrated mastery of the required job and language competencies and enrollment in a job or in further technical training. A formal 90-day follow-up on each trainee is conducted by the bilingual counselors to provide feedback to staff on the effectiveness of the program (Employment Training Center, 1995).



(Authorship unknown. Adapted from the BVT model as developed by Friedenberg, 1995)

Strengths:

- Students at any level of English proficiency can enter the program, and support is provided to ensure they receive linguistically and culturally appropriate training.
- Vocational training can begin immediately in the native language, with instruction gradually shifting to English as proficiency improves.
- Special attention is given to a comprehensive, integrated system of support services from the initial recruitment to the job placement stage.
- Many curriculum and training materials exist to assist teachers and administrators who wish to implement this model.

Disadvantages:

- It is often difficult to find persons with training in teaching specific occupational skills who are also bilingual. Bilingual aides, with limited training, may assume much responsibility for training.
- Classes must usually be conducted with students who *all* speak the same native language.
- The full range of support services advocated by the program may be costly to plan, operate, and coordinate.
- Effort must be made to ensure that students do not rely too heavily on their native languages to the exclusion of learning English.

Figure 4-8 **The Bilingual Vocational Training Model**

Planning Programs and Services

In recent years, a number of materials have been developed to help administrators with overall planning of vocational education and language training for LEP adults. Several have been developed in conjunction with bilingual vocational training programs (see Bradley, Killian, & Friedenberg, 1990; Friedenberg, 1991a; and Troike, Golub, & Lugo, 1981). The *Vocational English Language Training Resource Package,* written by Grover and Mrowicki in 1985 for the Office of Refugee Resettlement, provided an extensive package of resources to help those setting up vocational language training programs for refugee adults, including a section on estimating the cost of instruction. *Approaches to Employment Related Training for Adults Who Are Limited English Proficient,* edited by Nick Kremer (1984) and with contributions from many leaders in the field, also remains a valuable planning tool. *Case Studies of Vocational Education Services and Policies for Limited English Proficient Adults* (Fleischman, Willette, Hanberry, & Hopstode, 1988), although not a planning document as such, contains many useful concrete examples of how states and localities have planned for instruction. In addition, the handbook *Serving Vocational ESL Students* (Thomas, Bird, & Grover, 1992b) is a particularly good source for planners, especially those working in community colleges. Many of the examples in this chapter come from this excellent resource.

Each of these documents typically summarizes a range of factors that must be taken into account to plan a comprehensive program for LEP adults. Eight categories of services that will be discussed in this chapter are listed below:

1. Determining local market needs and the need for services to LEP adults;
2. Developing institutional support and assessing existing resources;
3. Outreach, recruiting, initial screening, and intake;
4. The instructional component (vocational training and VESL);
5. Support services;
6. Cultural awareness activities;
7. Staffing and staff development; and
8. Program evaluation.

Programs vary in the extent to which each of these services is provided, but each component, most experts agree, is important if a program is to be successful.

Determining Local Market Needs and the Need for Services to LEP Adults

Most providers agree that the programs that make the most progress are those that take into account two things: the labor market and the community. The Center for Employment Training (CET), a nonprofit organization based in San Jose, began in 1967 and is heralded as one of the most outstanding models for vocational training for hard-to-serve adults. The program embraces a belief in inclusion rather than exclusion and refuses to turn away students because they are poor training risks. It has no entrance requirements. Students choose their own training and learn at their own pace. They typically spend six months in the program putting in 35 to 40 hours a week and do not "graduate" until they're placed in a job. Over 53,000 low-income men and women have been trained and placed through the program. About half the students are migrant farmworkers or former farmworkers, and nearly half are limited English proficient. The program has grown to support 25 centers in California, Arizona, and Nevada. Most of the $6,000 (average) tuition is paid through federal

1. **Labor Market Demand**—In what types of jobs do you foresee making the greatest number of hires in the near future or over the next five years? How many projected new hires in each job area?

2. **Labor Market Supply**—Do you expect to be able to fill those positions easily? Why or why not? If yes, from what groups do you usually draw? (That is, from vocational schools, general high school graduates, displaced workers from other industries, women coming back into the work force, etc.)

3. **Market Prognosis**—In which job types do you expect that the demand will be greater than the supply, if any?

4. **Technical Skills Requirements**—In general terms, what technical skills and education or training background are required for the types of jobs from question #3?

5. **English Language and Literacy Skills Requirements**—What levels of English skills are required by the types of jobs above? To read instructions? At a high or low level? To communicate with superiors, co-workers, outside parties? To write?

6. **Work Characteristics**—What are some of the major characteristics of the work environment for these types of jobs that planners should be aware of? For example, what will the entry-level wages be? What are the advancement possibilities? What wages and benefits come with advancement? What are the hours, shifts? Any others?

7. **Other Requirements**—Are there any other prerequisites for these jobs that we should consider in planning our program? For instance, the need of a car, union membership, good physical strength, etc.? Bonding requirements, security clearance?

Figure 4-9 **Examples of Survey Questions**

From Thomas, R., Bird, L., & Grover, J. (1992b). *Serving Vocational ESL Students*, p. 24. Washington, DC: American Association of Community Colleges.

jobs programs, such as JTPA or JOBS. The program also follows students up to six months after graduation to help them cope with any problems that might diminish their chance for success. Program staff assert that efforts to keep continually updated on the labor market and new technologies within various industries have been a key element of their success (Center for Employment Training, 1993).

Research Management Corporation (1987) suggest that planners address some of the key questions listed in Figure 4-9 (and reprinted from an adaptation developed by Thomas, Bird, and Grover, 1992b, p. 24).

To assist in this process, Thomas, Bird, and Grover (1992b) suggest that each institution appoint an advisory panel that includes representatives of

Building Close Links With Industry — Box 4G

The Center for Employment Training, based in San Jose, California, strives to hire current and highly qualified technical people directly out of industry as instructors because it believes they know what industry wants, needs, and requires. "At CET we believe that traditional classroom training just reinforces old memories about failing in school. Many students drop out of such programs long before they get their hands on a machine. Why? Because they are divorced from the technical skills equipment. The prospect of a job becomes too abstract, too invisible, too unreal....We put a student's hands on a machine first thing. It gets them hooked and builds their self-esteem," says Russell Tershy, CET Executive Director (Bleakley, 1994, p. B1).

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employers in the community likely to hire program graduates. These members should help the program decide which vocational training areas to target for LEP students and keep administrators abreast of workplace factors such as plant closings that may lead to dislocated workers or new guidelines for local industries that will require workers to have new skills.

In the early years, project administrators often learned the hard way about the importance of a good needs assessment of the community's labor market. Pankratz and Friedenberg (1987) report on one bilingual-vocational training project designed to help participants prepare for jobs in heating and air-conditioning. After instituting the project, planners found that relatively few jobs in the field were available. To obtain existing jobs, students needed to become certified technicians. This required two years of study rather than the 15-week training offered by the program.

Developing Institutional Support and Assessing Existing Resources

Building institutional support requires that a well planned presentation of the needs of potential LEP students and of the local labor market, and how the program could meet these needs be developed and presented to the administration of the institution. Planners also need to point out the benefits that can be derived by the sponsoring institution. This information must be presented to top-level administrators, potential employers of program graduates, and members of community organizations. An advisory panel can aid greatly in this process.

Bradley, Killian, and Friedenberg (1990) outline other considerations. Planners need to locate appropriate facilities such as space for classrooms and training labs, office space, and other resources such as computers, telephones, and so on. In order to minimize potential barriers to participation, programs need to find appropriate locations for the program, in areas accessible to the immigrant population and on public transportation routes. They also need to establish training schedules that can be as adaptable as possible to the needs of students (for example, night classes available for working students).

Programs also need continued planning as funding situations change. For example, several community college programs have faced the reality of making transitions from BVT grant programs to total college funding. In one instance, this meant promoting the initial BVT model to the other departments in the community college system and adapting it to new occupational areas. In another, a BVT accounting program that moved to the continuing education center adapted to an individualized instructional format with general VESL support. Yet another program reconceptualized its BVT Early Childhood Education program to prepare LEP students to enter the early childhood education degree program rather than earning the Childhood Development Associate credential that had been offered under the BVT grant.

Planning for Transitions Between Programs

One potential barrier to participation, of which planners have become increasingly aware in recent years, is the lack of transition of learners from one agency to another. As Wrigley (1993) and Rance-Roney (1995) point out, ESL students from adult schools rarely make transitions to community colleges or vocational schools. Teachers often provide students with

Meeting the Needs of the Banking Community — Box 4H

As one of the first settlement houses in urban Chicago, Erie Neighborhood House has a 125-year history of working with low-income immigrant families. Today they continue to adapt their programs to meet the needs of the mostly Latino community. As homes in their community became "gentrified" and the cost of housing went up, they found that residents needed to earn higher salaries in order to be able to afford to remain in the neighborhood. They developed the Pathways to Success program to help adults get the training they need to move from $5.00 an hour jobs to $10 an hour jobs. The project has established relationships with 19 banks in the area to assist in the development of a pre-employment curriculum to prepare adults to become bank tellers, customer service representatives, bookkeepers, clerks, and account representatives. Many who attend the night classes are entry-level banking employees who would like to move up in their branch bank but need more English and other skills to do so. Local banks supply some equipment and supplies and human resource staff from the banks volunteer to help with training. Students can also take a concurrent eight-month class in which English is used as the medium to teach decision making, problem solving, leadership, team work, and mathematics. Preference for enrollment is given to those earning less than $6.00 an hour and those who are unemployed, especially displaced workers (Erie Neighborhood House, 1995).

Restructuring to Meet the Need — Box 4I

In the early 1990s, Houston Community College underwent a major restructuring to close the gap between the demographics of the city (47% Hispanic) and those of the college (7% Hispanic). In doing so, the college surveyed the vocational needs and interests of the community, appointed more minorities and women in leadership positions, and developed a plan to make the Bilingual Vocational Training Director work at the systems level of the college in the Vice Chancellor of Technical Education's office, from which he could provide leadership in setting up bilingual vocational training programs at all the colleges in the system. In addition, at one of the colleges, an International Education Department Chair was given the task of developing a curriculum that would address multicultural issues (Thomas, Bird, & Grover, 1992a).

Responding and Adapting to Needs — Box 4J

At the Community College of Denver in the early 1990s, ten LEP students were recruited into the mainstream Early Childhood Education classes. Although there were some support services available, after several weeks, the students, who had begun the program with enthusiasm, began to fall behind. To keep the students from dropping out altogether, the college developed a three-hour block to introduce Early Childhood Education in a setting where instruction was taught jointly by the vocational instructor and an ESL teacher. The program is now considering a new Early Childhood Education bridge course and other ways to ensure that LEP students can succeed in their programs (Northern Illinois University, Office of Applied Innovations, 1994b).

little information about options for vocational education available to them because, due to the fragmented delivery system, teachers themselves are often unaware of available programs or feel overwhelmed by the complicated eligibility requirements and admission details associated with enrollment. Students find accessing the service-delivery system even more confusing. This may be especially true, Wrigley asserts, for immigrant students who enter American high schools as adolescents. This problem has been obscured since most programs do not keep records that might indicate what schools students have previously attended or where they go after they leave the program.

Planners are increasingly aware of the need to ensure that there is articulation between their intended program and others on the service continuum so that students who graduate from the highest level in an adult school are advanced enough to enroll at the beginning levels of vocational programs at vocational schools or community colleges. To aid in this process, in 1992, the U.S. Department of Education selected three grantees for a National English Literacy Transitional Demonstration Project. Each program was charged with developing replicable models for coordinated services among providers that would help students make the transition from one instructional level to another. (Boxes 4K-4M describe these programs in more detail.)

In order to help students make the transition to vocational education, many experts agree that an environment of high expectations must exist and students must be provided with access to the information they need to select programs appropriate to their needs and interests. As the new concept of one-stop educational centers is developed, many educators hope that such a dream can become a reality, particularly for late entry immigrant youth who often have fallen between the cracks.

Outreach, Recruitment, and Intake

Reaching out to LEP adults in the community often means not only helping students already in adult education make the transition to vocational programs, but also reaching adults who have not yet enrolled in programs but might benefit from them. Planners associated with Bilingual Vocational Training Projects suggest many ways to develop and strengthen relationships with community organizations and to promote the program in native language publications most likely to reach potential students. Bradley, Killian, and Friedenberg (1990), for example, provide a good outline of steps that can be taken to develop a comprehensive outreach plan.

Increasingly, educators have become aware of the kinds of barriers adults face when considering enrolling in a vocational training program, and are finding ways to address these questions with potential students during the recruiting and intake process. Wrigley points out that students may face both "intrinsic" and "extrinsic" barriers that make the transition to further education difficult (1993, p. 5). Intrinsic barriers, sometimes called "disposition" or "psychosocial" factors, include low self-esteem and low expectations. "Extrinsic" barriers are obstacles such as work demands or family obligations, lack of financial resources, lack of available child care, locations that are outside the immediate neighborhood, and inconvenient schedules that conflict with work or family obligations. A lack of familiarity with processes such as registration, admission, or eligibility requirements and a lack of knowledge

Developing Curricula to Bridge the Gap — Box 4K

The Arlington Adult Learning System (AALS) is a partnership developed in Arlington, Virginia, between the Arlington Education and Employment Program (REEP), a large program for immigrants and refugees within the Arlington County Public Schools; Hogar Hispano, a community-based organization; Marymount University, an independent, liberal arts university; and the Employment Training Center (ETC), an adult education program of the Arlington County Public Schools offering vocational training in clerical skills, child care, electrical trades, and printing. As one of the National English Literacy Transitional Demonstration Projects, the programs began their collaboration by jointly reviewing ESL curricula, starting at the upper end where the largest gap in language and skills existed. Instructors collectively decided which skills students need to transition from the adult education program to either the vocational training center or the university. Based on this data, they developed, piloted, and revised a coordinated ESL curriculum track, which is documented in *The Arlington Adult Learning System Curriculum: A Transitional ESL Curriculum for Adults.* The curriculum includes four levels of non-intensive lifeskills English, including pre-literacy (taught through Hogar Hispano), seven levels of intensive lifeskills English, and advanced pre-vocational and pre-academic tracks of instruction, as well as a computer-assisted pre-vocational/pre-academic track of classroom instruction (Mansoor & Grant, 1994).

Determining the Barriers to Success — Box 4L

The Massachusetts Department of Education's Massachusetts English Literacy Demonstration Project (MELD) has established partnerships with three community-based organizations and three community colleges to develop innovative approaches to transitional ESL programming. Among the activities include "bridge" classes between community-based organizations and community colleges, co-teacher training, collaborations for curriculum development, and the establishment of learning support centers using computer-based instruction. The project analyzed barriers to college success by researching the community colleges' services and conducted an ethnographic study on barriers to college success from the students' perspective (Kirkman, 1993).

Getting Past the First Steps — Box 4M

The aim of STEP (Success through Transitional English Program) is to improve the integration of limited English proficient persons in the community into El Paso Community College's technical and academic training programs. One of the National English Literacy Demonstration Projects, STEP has organized a series of workshops that take potential students from adult education components through the admission and registration processes. In addition, students also attend a special series of workshops that introduce them to note taking, test taking, and college writing. In the next phase, students sit in on college classes for a week. Every day after class, they compare notes and discuss the class with a STEP tutor. Once enrolled in classes, they receive customized tutoring from a STEP tutor (Clymer-Spradling, 1993).

about support services can also keep students out of programs. Some programs (Box 4N) are coming up with innovative approaches to recruitment and intake that provide a nonthreatening environment in which students find out about programs and get advice from staff about options for coordinating school with other responsibilities.

Other programs have begun to offer short orientation sessions prior to enrollment, both to provide students with information about course requirements before they make the commitment to enroll and to assess students' needs and appropriateness for the program. These orientation sessions, usually offered in the native language, give students a chance to look at how they can surmount barriers to attending classes, whether or not the course meets their goals, and whether they have the prerequisite skills needed to succeed. Some programs have found that adding this step to the intake process is cost-effective since it can both screen out students who face barriers that might preclude their completing the program at a particular point in their lives and encourage other students who may lack self-confidence in their ability to succeed but who are, in fact, ready for the program.

Multicultural Awareness

A lack of multicultural awareness on the part of faculty and staff in educational programs and community colleges can also constitute a barrier to participation. A lack of cultural understanding may cause staff at adult education programs, for example, to hold lower expectations of their linguistic minority students and to be reluctant to encourage them to move to higher-level instruction. Instructors within higher-level programs may also show an unwillingness to receive ESL students who are not fully proficient in English or who have different cultural values and practices. In contrast, programs that promote a strong philosophy of self-determination and high expectations among students and staff often receive accolades for higher graduation and placement rates for students. In their study of community colleges around the country, Thomas, Bird, and Grover (1992b) found that those programs that have been successful in serving vocational ESL students are placing an increasing emphasis on the explicit promotion of multicultural awareness at an institutional level. Programs are searching for new and better ways to identify culturally or linguistically based problems in the instructional programs and in the kinds of supportive services they offer. They are examining how to change the policies of community colleges to reflect the contributions and interests of diverse groups in the mission, operations, and service delivery.

Although many authors have produced materials related to multicultural awareness, only a few specifically address the needs of adult ESL students preparing for the U.S. workforce. *The Working Culture* by Hemphill, Pfaffenberger, and Hockman (1989), a two-workbook series of exercises, and *Cross-Cultural Communication in the Workplace: A Training Handbook* by Reed (1984) are two examples of outstanding practical materials that can be used in the classroom. In addition, the handbook *Serving Vocational ESL Students* (Thomas, Bird, & Grover, 1992b) contains a well-researched chapter on issues related to multicultural awareness. As the authors point out, cultural differences are learned unconsciously from infancy, through modeling and socialization within one's family and one's culture.

An ESL Expo — Box 4N

Once a year, El Paso Community College sponsors an ESL Expo, a one-day career/vocational fair for ESL students. Staff of most vocational programs at the college set up booths and make multimedia presentations about their programs to intermediate-to-advanced ESL students. ESL classes from all three main campuses visit the Expo; each year it is held at a different campus. After the ESL Expo, ESL instructors conduct follow-up activities in the classroom to assist students to find out more about programs that interest them and how to apply (Thomas, Bird, & Grover, 1992b, p. 93).

Career Awareness and Job Readiness — Box 4O

Many programs are beginning to find better approaches to career awareness and job readiness for students with limited educational backgrounds. Elgin Community College (1987) in Illinois has developed *Alternativas: A Bilingual Vocational Model Program and Curriculum*. Their guide presents the curriculum for a 12-week, 30-hour bilingual career and job-readiness workshop geared to single parents. The first five sessions focus primarily on helping students identify their own abilities and then think about how these abilities might be used in different work situations. They visualize the kind of future they would like to have. Then, they begin to learn what goal setting is and how to set realistic, attainable short- and long-term goals for integrating their work with their family responsibilities. The last sessions deal with strategies for improving decision-making and for becoming more assertive. Some of the interactive games and activities used to teach these concepts are in Spanish and others in English, depending on the nature of the task. The activities help students become more strongly committed to succeeding in the vocational program they then choose (Elgin Community College, 1987).

Making the First Step in a Familiar Language — Box 4P

Hostos Community College, located in the Bronx, serves a primarily Hispanic community where Spanish is the common language of commerce and daily life. In order to help students, most of whom are the first generation in their family to attend college, to make the transition to the college environment, they are permitted to take introductory content courses in their vocational (or academic) areas in Spanish while they are working on basic skills and ESL (Thomas, Bird, & Grover, 1992b).

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> Much of culture is unconscious. We do not normally think about it until we bump up against cultural differences. Then we begin to be aware of cultural and language differences and how they affect the way we interpret our experiences and interactions with others. Culture has been likened to an iceberg, since much of it lies hidden beneath the surface of our consciousness. The hidden dimensions of culture underlie our values and influence our behavior and the way we see the world. (Thomas, Bird, & Grover, 1992b, p. 10)

Staffs at community colleges in Denver, El Camino, El Paso, and San Francisco have developed cross-cultural workshops for faculty, staff, and students to help them develop an awareness of their own culture and its influences on their personal values, behavior, and thinking process. Through experiential workshops using simulations, games, role plays, personal stories, and analysis of critical incidents, they may become more aware of the unconscious assumptions and stereotypes they carry about gender, race, or ethnicity and learn how these assumptions can result in stereotypes, prejudice, and suspicion. At Lansing Community College, staff have held a multicultural fair and have formed a student diversity task force. Hostos Community College has organized workshops on the cultural differences between their two largest Spanish-speaking populations: those of Dominican and Puerto Rican heritage. Houston Community College recently mounted a special effort to hire more staff members who are bilingual.

Cross-cultural games and mock tests based on culture-specific information have also been incorporated into facilitator-training activities organized through Bilingual Vocational Instructor Training Programs such as Promoting Access to Vocational Education (PAVE) in California (Franklin, 1995) and Capacity Building for States (CBS) in Illinois (Lopez-Valadez & Reed, 1989). They allow BVT administrators and teachers to step outside their own cultural assumptions and experience first hand the frustration of the outsider. Facilitators often organize small group discussions of critical incidents—scenarios that involve a conflict arising from a cultural difference—and help participants to explore the behaviors that contributed to the problem and to devise alternative strategies for handling the situation that take cultural factors into consideration. Figure 4-10 is an example of one such critical incident.

Developing the Instructional Component

Developing the instructional component to meet the special needs of LEP students can be challenging. There must be coordination between the VESL and vocational components, the VESL teacher must use special techniques and approaches to design the curriculum, the vocational instructor must know how to adapt instruction to make it more comprehensible, and many decisions must be made about the proper approach to assessment. This section briefly discusses these complex factors.

Adapting Teaching Methodology

Coordination Between the VESL and Vocational Components

Ideally, developing an instructional program for LEP vocational students requires close coordination between the VESL instructor and the vocational instructor. According to Lopez-Valadez (1985), VESL instruction should support vocational instruction by concentrating on the English skills specific to the vocational program. For maximum effectiveness, she points out, the VESL instructor should know the technical content of the vocational course and use language

CRITICAL INCIDENT

Alice and Mina had become good friends shortly after they attended a community college nursing class. They were the only two LEP students in a class of 15. Because of their English, they helped each other out speaking in Tagalog, and kept to themselves. They came to class early, worked through break, and always stayed after class to work on their projects. Other students were annoyed by their behavior and told the instructor about it. The instructor then announced to the class that no one was permitted to come to class early or stay beyond class hours.

1) What is the cross-cultural conflict here?

2) How do you feel about the way this situation was handled by the teacher?

3) To what degree do you agree or disagree with what was said or done?

4) What Asian cultural values (if any) are reflected here?

5) What American cultural values (if any) are reflected here?

6) How would you have handled this situation?

Figure 4-10 **Critical Incident**

From Franklin, L. (1995). *A Guide to PAVE Facilitator Training*, p. 18. Torrance, CA: El Camino Community College.

materials paralleling vocational course content. Optimally, both the vocational and the VESL instructors analyze and determine the specific oral and written English skills appropriate for the VESL course. The vocational instructor identifies tasks, safety precautions, technical vocabulary teaching techniques, and primary teaching materials, while the VESL instructor identifies language structures needed to understand and perform the tasks and selects appropriate language teaching techniques.

As Elizabeth Platt observed in her study of collaboration between vocational and VESL instructors (1992; 1996), vocational classrooms can be exceptionally rich language learning laboratories. There are many built-in incentives for language learning. Of course, there is the promise of developing a marketable skill. But, in addition, she points out, although language development is a by-product of vocational education, students quickly learn that if they fail to master the technical lexicon of their occupation, they cannot

Coordinating Vocational and VESL Instruction — Box 4Q

Since 1975, the China Institute in America has operated a bilingual vocational training program for Chinese chefs. Students learn basic preparation and cooking skills necessary for Cantonese, Szechuan, Peking, and Hunan cuisines. By the end of the course, they are able to prepare more than sixty popular dishes. The intensive program also teaches them the English terms for all ingredients, how to take orders on the telephone, how to give prices and describe dishes, how to interact with co-workers in English and how to give and respond to safety warnings. After 13 weeks of classroom training, trainees undergo seven weeks of field practice, returning once a week for VESL classes and employability counseling. VESL teachers work closely with the Chinese chef/trainers, helping them to focus on the English language needed for getting and keeping a job in the field. The instructors also visit the field practice sites to train supervisors in how to encourage English language development for trainees. Instruction is conducted Sunday through Thursday to help trainees become accustomed to working on weekends and to give them one weekday to conduct business, such as job hunting (China Institute in America, 1984).

discuss processes and procedures with supervisors and fellow students. The implications of potential communication difficulties on the job become more obvious. A third factor, she notes, is the fact that vocational classrooms provide language opportunities at many levels of proficiency, and the functions of language are varied. When language-sensitive instruction occurs, it can generate the opportunity not only for analysis, synthesis, and evaluation but also for the higher levels of language use required to carry out those processes. "Thus, with properly trained instructors, home-language support, and/or VESL assistance, and with the requisite math and other academic skills," she notes, "almost any student should be able to participate successfully in vocational education" (1992, p. 37).

Methods for the VESL Instructor

Playing a support role to the vocational class does not mean, however, that VESL teaching requires limited skills. In fact, the VESL teaching environment challenges many traditional approaches to ESL that focus on grammar and emphasize form over meaning. In many ESL classrooms, Platt (1992; 1996) has observed, teachers control the topics, initiate the questions, and often anticipate problems before they emerge, so that students must merely supply answers to narrow questions rather than experiment with language themselves. Such practices, she points out, result in programs that fail to stress higher order cognitive or linguistic functions. Students do not describe, explain, initiate questions, solve problems, or participate in connected discourse in many ESL classrooms.

In the worst case scenario, a VESL class may also fail to emphasize higher order cognitive and linguistic functions as well. Some, for example, have been known to focus almost solely on the memorization of a list of vocationally related vocabulary items. In the best cases, however, teachers involve learners in working collaboratively in small groups on interactive tasks that mirror the kinds of activities that go on in the vocational classroom.

Platt recommends many ways in which VESL teachers can support vocational programs,

Cooperative Learning Approach

Box 4R

One approach used by the PAVE program in California is cooperative learning. This methodology is based on the assumption that students learn more and acquire more self-confidence when they have the opportunity to take greater responsibility for their own learning and are encouraged to work together toward a clearly defined goal. In cooperative learning, students often sit facing each other in small group circles, discussing, explaining, and teaching each other as they learn, with the teacher acting as a facilitator or guide. Groups are taught how to analyze their own effectiveness and monitor their progress toward a goal. Individual as well as group outcomes and progress are considered important (just as they might be in restructured workplaces). Teacher training materials on cooperative learning point out that while employers seek to hire workers with prerequisite technical skills, "they may value even more those potential employees with effective interpersonal skills—people who can work with others, take responsibility and initiative to solve problems, and contribute to the team effort of furthering the goals of the organization" (p. 21). PAVE has also found that cooperative learning-based classrooms are useful in helping students from different cultures develop an awareness of the social conventions and behaviors needed to function in the American working world. When balanced with other more traditional activities, such as lectures and presentations, PAVE found such an approach to be motivational, as students gain more control over their own learning (Franklin, 1995).

even if the teachers lack content knowledge related to the vocational skill area. Some VESL teachers she has observed have helped to make the vocational classroom language comprehensible by using videotaped or audiotaped portions of class lectures to practice vocabulary and to identify sources of difficulty. Good teachers also practice vocabulary by having students explain concepts, function, or procedures, rather than simply reciting words and definitions. In all cases, VESL teachers visit the vocational classrooms to observe language interaction; occasionally, if appropriate, they may work with LEP students in the vocational classroom. Teachers may also spend a good deal of time working with printed materials, charts, and diagrams to help students locate and comprehend information. Finally, teachers may assign writing tasks similar to those required in the occupation for which the student is being trained. These teachers face many obstacles. They must not only learn new techniques for teaching language but also acquire technical knowledge related to the vocational classes being supported. In some cases, teachers may be expected to learn content from several vocational areas. Platt warns, however, that playing a support role may not provide enough input for the VESL teacher truly to help LEP students, especially in cases where instruction in the vocational class is deficient or the role of the VESL teacher is not respected.

For this reason, Project CBS at Northern Illinois University asserts that those ESL teachers who are particularly versed in training in the communicative competency approach and have dealt with multilevel classes are best equipped to work in a VESL context. The project recommends that those who would like to become VESL teachers read about the occupations they might be asked to teach, interview vocational education instructors in the field, and, if possible, audit the vocational course to learn the content and also to observe the language and literacy requirements and

expectations of the class. Prospective teachers may also want to visit worksites in the skill areas taught in the class (Northern Illinois University, Office of Applied Innovations, 1994a).

Methods for the Vocational Instructor

Vocational instructors need specialized training to take advantage of the language learning potential of their classrooms. Thomas, Bird, and Grover suggest focusing on the following cultural and language needs (1992b, pp. 51-52):

- Understanding the process of second language acquisition;
- Respecting and understanding students' cultural backgrounds;
- Presenting and discussing the culture of the American workplace;
- Arranging for bilingual assistance if necessary;
- Giving LEP students the time they need to finish speaking and writing;
- Allowing time for listening and checking comprehension;
- Adapting teaching and presentation styles to be more comprehensible to LEP students by:
  - using gestures and visual aids,
  - repeating and reinforcing key terms,
  - using simple, clear speech, and
  - explaining new terms and idioms of the workplace; and
- Using adapted texts or adapted readings for appropriate ESL levels by:
  - simplifying idiomatic and culturally specific expressions,
  - reducing the number of long, complex sentences,
  - turning procedural sections into logically ordered lists,
  - explaining and highlighting key points and terms,
  - omitting unnecessary details,
  - adding examples and illustrations, and
  - including practice exercises.

Vocational instructors may also explore ways to use other students as resources, integrate community resource persons as guest speakers, work in pairs and small groups, and—using other cooperative learning techniques—individualize instructions and develop worksheets and vocabulary practice exercises to accompany texts. The PAVE project has developed a number of successful tools for helping instructors to examine their own practice. For example, the Lecturette Techniques Checklist (Figure 4-11) helps teachers to examine their own practice by rating their lecture techniques according to a wide range of criteria. Instructors can then discuss with one another during training sessions the areas where they would like to improve.

Using Tutors and Aides

Tutors and aides are frequently used in vocational programs for LEP adults, both in classrooms and in learning labs. In the classroom, bilingual aides can be highly valued when they know the vocational content and speak the language of the students. Tutors can work with students individually and in small groups to explain concepts that are not readily understood in English and to help students understand aspects of the classroom and the workplace that may be culturally different from their previous experiences. When bilingual tutors are from a similar background as the students, they may develop a sense of trust with students that is essential to a collaborative learning process. In many cases, tutors can provide valuable insights into the lives of individual students that can assist the VESL and vocational instructors in better planning their course of study.

LECTURETTE TECHNIQUES CHECKLIST

These techniques for presenting information in a lecture situation are good for any audience but they are especially effective when working with limited English proficiency (LEP) students.

AFTER YOU TEACH EACH LESSON, EVALUATE YOUR OWN EFFECTIVENESS IN TEACHING LEP STUDENTS BY COMPLETING THIS CHECKLIST.

			1 Hardly	2 Sometimes	3 Often	4 Consistently
Language	1.	Speak clearly and at a moderate speed?	☐	☐	☐	☐
	2.	Form short, structurally simple sentences?	☐	☐	☐	☐
	3.	Keep terminology constant, avoid too many alternative expressions and slang?	☐	☐	☐	☐
	4.	Repeat key vocabulary, both within sentences and separately?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Content	5.	Introduce the main idea before you "dive into" the lesson?	☐	☐	☐	☐
	6.	Present information in small, discrete places?	☐	☐	☐	☐
	7.	State important concepts several times, varying sentence structure to get points across?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Multisensory Communication	8.	Use physical gestures and "body language" to demonstrate a point or procedure?	☐	☐	☐	☐
	9.	Use visual aids? -Actual tools and equipment, pictures, charts, your own drawings on blackboard, slides, films, etc.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Comprehension Checks	10.	Ask comprehension questions during the presentation? -First, YES/NO questions -Then, "Which, what, where, when" questions which require only one or two word answers -Finally, open-ended "how" and "why" questions	☐	☐	☐	☐

Figure 4-11 **Lecturette Techniques Checklist**

From Franklin, L. (1995). *A Guide to PAVE Facilitator Training*, p. 26b. Torrance, CA: El Camino Community College.

Determining Curriculum Needs

In recent years, an increasing number of VESL and vocational training materials for LEP students have been developed. Curriculum materials exist in a wide variety of areas. Some cover topics related to career awareness and cultural orientation. Many pre-employment training workbooks dealing with general competencies related to preparing for jobs can be found. Vocational materials in career areas such as agriculture, business, health, home economics, and industry are available, often both in English and other languages (most commonly Spanish). Most of the materials have been written by practitioners working in the field. Planners wishing to locate materials may want to consult the WorkWorld Resources Database at the Center for Applied Linguistics (1996). The database houses information about existing curriculum materials, including up-to-date information about materials available through ERIC, the Educational Resource Information Center. A number of commercial materials also exist, particularly those addressing more general competency areas that apply to many vocations.

In most cases, however, while existing curriculum materials may serve as a guide, program personnel find they must develop their own materials or adapt course materials chosen by their institution to suit the context of their program. In order to develop the curriculum, instructors must undertake a needs assessment. In *From the Classroom to the Workplace* (Center for Applied Linguistics, 1983), the authors suggest that instructors take into account the following questions:

- What are the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of the learners?
- What are the vocational goals of these learners?
- What must they be able to do with English in order to succeed in jobs?
- What level of proficiency will they need? How accurate must their pronunciation and their use of English grammar be?
- What is the minimal vocabulary they will need to be able to pursue their vocational training and be successful in their job?
- What cultural preconceptions of education and language classes, in particular, should be taken into consideration in these materials? (p. 64)

In addition to the above questions, curriculum developers need to take into consideration institutional goals and realities, such as the model of articulation between various program components, the total instructional time allotted, and other requirements. They may be able to receive valuable information from their institution if they have conducted an institution-wide assessment of the needs of LEP students.

After the materials are developed, they may be field tested and revised before being implemented. Then, as they are used, they may be further evaluated. Even after materials have been refined, instructors may find that each class is different and further adaptations will continually be needed to make the materials relevant for a particular group. This is especially true for learner-centered curricula that require input from students in developing and using the lessons. Planning for curriculum development, most practitioners find, is an ongoing process, but one that can be challenging and fun as instructors find ways to develop materials that are ever more responsive to students needs.

According to the Center for Applied Linguistics (1983), curriculum planners need to consult many data sources in undertaking their needs assessment. The vocational instructor, of course, is a key source of information and can provide samples of instructional materials and curricula used in existing vocational training programs. Often this material is developed for native speakers of English and must be adapted to meet the needs of LEP students.

The planner may also want to interview students, former students, and bilingual aides to gain insight into the difficulties they have experienced in the classroom. If time and funding permit, planners should visit workplaces to become acquainted with the language demands of the vocation, the situations in which language and literacy are used, and the relative proficiency required. They should conduct on-site observations as well as interview employers and employees (particularly those from linguistic minorities) and collect samples of written materials used on the job or present in the work environment (such as notices on bulletin boards). Planners should be alert not just to language used to perform the job but also to the kinds of linguistic interactions that take place in the cafeteria and on break time between co-workers and between workers and supervisors. Vocational instructors can learn much about conducting needs assessments from the experience of educators working in the field of workplace education (described in Chapter 5). Finally, especially if the curriculum is to be used by many teachers, planners should consider the needs of their teachers: their level of experience, whether they are familiar with the vocational area, and their previous experience teaching language. Many may work part time and have little time for preparation outside the classroom. Others may come from a foreign language teaching background and may be unfamiliar with working with students who possess lower levels of literacy (Center for Applied Linguistics, 1983).

Adapting and Creating Materials

Creating VESL Materials

After a needs assessment has been completed, the curriculum planner must choose a syllabus design and begin to identify the objectives or competencies to be addressed, the language functions to be covered, sample language to guide teachers, and classroom activities and supplemental materials to use. As discussed in Chapter 3, a wide variety of approaches to second language instruction exist. These are reflected in the kinds of syllabus designs currently in use in vocational ESL programs. Many curriculum materials were reviewed in the preparation of this report, and many of the syllabus designs found were structured more traditionally around language forms to be mastered and the rules for combining them. Language patterns were presented and students were expected to repeat them. Vocabulary was highly controlled in order to focus on grammar. Little reading and writing was evident (possibly based on the premise that reading and writing should be delayed until speaking and listening skills are sufficiently developed). The problem with such an approach (which is becoming less popular) is that students may leave the class having practiced a pattern, but may be unable to respond in real-life situations where speakers may use variations of the pattern. In addition, this approach focuses attention on the language itself rather than on authentic communication.

Instead of focusing on grammatical forms and language patterns, many of the more recently developed materials use a competency-based approach that focuses on situations in which an individual might have to use language. Language competencies are often listed and then paired with related language functions (such as requests, offers, warnings, refusals, or threats). For example, an objective such as "offer and respond to suggestions" might list expressing advice as a key language function. A variety of sentences that might be used with that function in differing situations might then be provided, such as "May I offer a suggestion?," "I think we should...," and "Wouldn't it be a good idea to...." Then, activities that can be used to stimulate natural communication can be devised. Some programs rely on general commercial adult ESL materials that can be matched to the

VESL competencies to be addressed. Other programs devise interactive activities such as role plays, team building exercises, critical incidents, and games to allow students to use the language as part of more authentic communicative activities that integrate reading and writing tasks with speaking and listening.

Still other programs use the vocational textbook as the primary source and develop their lessons to coordinate with each chapter. The approach selected depends not only on the background and philosophy of the curriculum planner, but also, as mentioned earlier, on the backgrounds of the teachers, their available planning time, the ease of use, and the way in which the materials can be coordinated with the vocational training component.

Modifying Vocational Materials

In addition to developing a competency-based curriculum to address necessary language functions needed to communicate in the vocational classroom and on the job, curriculum planners need to modify the vocational materials used in the program. As PAVE facilitator Laura Franklin points out (1995), standard texts and readings may need to be altered to allow easier access, with smaller text units and simpler sentences. Vocabulary should be streamlined to omit redundancy, slang, or variant terminology. Active structures should replace passive ones, and all "understood" sentence parts (such as pronouns, for example) need to be restored to aid comprehension. Materials, she stresses, also need to be adapted so they are visually accessible, with less dense text, more white space, and numerous headings and subheadings to guide students to the relevant information. The page layout should allow for numerous illustrations and diagrams (1995, p. 25). "Presenting information in small pieces, with repetition of key words and ideas," she observes, "helps students to follow along. And using pictures, gestures and demonstrations—strategies that take advantage of students' diverse learning styles—will reinforce the information presented visually" (1995, p. 26e). At PAVE, facilitators examine samples of text materials along with counterpart adaptations and work through sample exercises that give them hands-on experience revising text to make it more accessible (Figures 4-12 and 4-13).

The Use of Technology

When curriculum materials were reviewed for this paper, very few examples of the use of technology in the classroom were found. Thomas, Bird, and Grover (1992b) also remarked on the lack of availability of technology for VESL and vocational education for LEP adults in their survey of more than 50 community colleges, suggesting that technology remains an untapped resource for many programs. They point out the need to investigate the impact of distance learning and other individually paced alternatives for LEP adults, to determine effectiveness of computer-based learning, to explore how technology can be used for students with multiple barriers (e.g., the hearing impaired), and to develop model approaches to using courseware authoring systems (1992b, p. 51). The key area where technology was observed was in centers and labs where students could go for remediation of basic academic and language skills. In these centers, self-paced computer-based programs to teach content, build vocabulary, and practice taking tests were available. In a few cases, videos were also available. For example, videos designed for homeowners were used by programs in the building trades. In his study of immigrant adults in the San Francisco area, Hemphill (Center for Literacy Studies, 1992) found that immigrant adults use video frequently in their everyday lives. Movies and other instructional guides in their native language provide recreation and a vital link to their home culture and language. Box 4V describes a few of the videos that exist within the field. Many were developed for teacher training. Several on-line bulletin boards exist for practitioners and administrators as well.

Competency-Based Approaches — Box 4S

The Office Skills Training Course developed by Fairfax County Schools is an example of a competency-based approach to VESL instruction. During the 600-hour course, 300 hours are devoted to keyboarding, filing, using calculators, and using a copier and facsimile machine. The remaining 300 hours focus on VESL topics, taught by theme areas. Their detailed curriculum outline describes a sequence for identifying and teaching many key functions students need to get and keep a clerical job, from basic introductions, to using the telephone, to looking for a job, to cultural and communication factors that impact on keeping the job (Roberts & Walton, 1993).

Cultural "Pink Sheets" — Box 4T

Chinatown Resources Development Center's, the program that led to the popular VESL pre-vocational series *English That Works* (Savage, How, & Yeung, 1982), the native language was used to introduce new survival ESL lessons and explain terms difficult to define or demonstrate in English, such as zip codes or social security cards, and to provide relevant cross-cultural information about topics such as handshaking and greeting behavior. These introductory sheets were published separately from the lesson and in Chinese. People not enrolled in the program often stopped by to pick up these "pink sheets" because they provided valuable information in their own language (Chinatown Resources Development Center, 1985).

Exploring the Links Between Work and Culture — Box 4U

Work and Your Life is an 11-lesson unit designed for ESL students at the intermediate to advanced levels. Its focus is on the exploration of work and related lifestyle issues. Together students explore their definitions of work and differences between work in the United States and their home countries. They also explore through charting activities how other people may hold differing values toward work. This leads to an exploration of students' goals toward work in this country and how they will maintain their cultural values while adjusting to the realities of the U.S. workplace (Benice, 1993).

ORIGINAL VERSION

REPAIRING CRACKS IN PLASTER WALLS (Excerpt)

Remove loose plaster using the pointed end of a can opener, undercutting a wedge-shaped opening in the wall so that the spackling compound will hold. The area to be patched should be wetted with a sponge to prevent water absorption by the old plaster. (If the patch dries out too quickly, cracking may result.) Using a pre-mixed spackling compound and a putty knife, fill the crack so that it is slightly higher than the wall.

ADAPTED VERSION

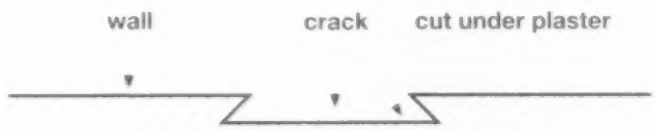
REPAIRING CRACKS IN PLASTER WALLS (Excerpt)

Materials you will need:

pointed can opener, spackling compound, container for mixing spackling compound, putty knife

Procedure:

1. Remove the loose plaster around the crack with the pointed end of a can opener.
2. Make a cut under the plaster with the can opener.



3. Wet the area with a sponge.
4. Put spackling compound into the crack with the putty knife.

Figure 4-12 **Example of Modified Text**

From Francis, L. (1995). *A Guide to Plain Facilitator Training* (p. 26). Torrance, CA: El Camino Community College.

STRATEGIES FOR MODIFYING TEXT

USE SHORT, SIMPLE SENTENCES

Original: Examining the system includes checking for and repairing leaks, which left undetected can cause problems in the future.

Adapted: Also, check for leaks.
Repair leaks immediately.
Unrepaired leaks can cause problems in the future.

Original: To ensure that both sections are even, stand behind the patron, grab the hair, and, pulling it up, cut straight across.

Adapted: _____
_____
_____

USE SIMPLE VERB CONSTRUCTIONS

Original: Low temperature may have been the reason for the leak.

Adapted: Low temperature was possibly the reason for the leak.

Original: This could be expected to reoccur.

Adapted: _____

AVOID PASSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS (Use imperative—commands—for procedures.)

Original: . . . filters must be replaced
. . . this is done by turning

Adapted: Replace the filter . . .
Turn the . . .

Figure 4-13 **Strategies for Modifying Text**

From Franklin, L. (1995). *A Guide to PAVE Facilitator Training*, p. 26c. Torrance, CA: El Camino Community College.

Videos for Workplace and Vocational ESL: A Sampler — Box 4V

English at Work: A Tool Kit for Teachers, developed by Barndt, Belfiore, and Handscombe (1991) is a 35-minute video highlighting a participatory approach to learning in action based on the work of the Center for Workforce Education in Canada.

A Model Program for Serving LEP Students, developed by Joan Friedenberg (1991b) is a 45-minute video directed primarily at administrators and teachers, highlighting the Bilingual Vocational Training Program. It was produced through the Center for Education and Training for Employment at The Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio.

Sharing What Works, a series of videos produced by the Center for Applied Linguistics (1993) with funding from the Hewlett Foundation includes two workplace ESL titles. *Union-Sponsored Worker ESL Education* highlights the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union project in New York City, and *Workplace ESL Classes* describes the workplace education program at the Arlington (Virginia) Education and Employment Program.

Tools of the Trade (1992b) and other videos that are part of **The Cutting Edge** series were developed at the El Paso Community College Literacy Center. These videos and help learners to visualize working and speaking English on the job.

VESL Strategies for Community College Practitioners by Kathleen Wong (1992) is a video of a workshop presented to PAVE facilitators. Other teacher training videos were produced by PAVE.

A Workbook for WorkPlays: You and Your Rights on the Job by Lenore Balliro (1988) was developed as part of a project for the Arnold M. Dubin Labor Education Center at Southeastern Massachusetts University. A teacher's text outlining how to use this video, developed through a participatory process with students, is also available. (See the bibliography for more information about how to obtain the materials.)

Working in the United States by the Center for Applied Linguistics (1987) is a series of three videos describing workplace language and practices to recently arrived immigrants and refugees. Workbooks to accompany the materials are available.

Learner Assessment

Developing an assessment process is one of the key elements of the overall instructional component. It is also one of the most difficult and problematic. Few adult vocational ESL educators are satisfied with the existing choices. Many commercially available tests are inappropriate for use with adult ESL learners and no single test meets the needs of every context. Yet, in spite of their limitations, in many cases funders continue to require that these tests be used for multiple purposes: to ascertain entry requirements, to judge individual learner progress, and often to measure program effectiveness. Alternative approaches to assessment are being developed; however, most do not meet certain program accountability requirements. To develop good alternative assessment tools and processes requires time and effort and additional funding that has not been available to many programs. This section will highlight some of the key issues in assessing vocational ESL students and describe useful materials planners can consult as they make decisions in this area.

The Purposes of Testing

In *Sparks of Excellence*, Wrigley, Chisman, and Ewen (1993) provide an overview of many of the concerns regarding testing and assessment that face adult ESL practitioners. One of the key difficulties, they point out, is that no one instrument can serve all purposes. After a community needs assessment has been undertaken to determine the kinds of services that are appropriate, there are a variety of types of learner assessment that can be undertaken. Among these are the following:

Intake. An intake process serves to make sure the program is the right one for an individual student. During the intake process, vocational students are often given tests for literacy and language proficiency as well as assessments to determine their career interests and aptitudes.

Placement. During the intake process, students are often also assessed for the purpose of placing them in a certain level or class. Students may be given oral proficiency tests, reading and writing tests in English, and tests in their native language.

Progress. As students continue in the program, they and their teachers need to know how well they are mastering the information being taught. Progress assessment may be *formative*, where progress is judged midway through the program in order to plan for ongoing instruction, or *summative*, where students and teachers together judge a student's progress in meeting the program goals. Both commercially available tests and alternative assessment tools such as portfolios are used to assess progress.

Achievement. Employers and educators often want to know whether students have achieved certain threshold levels that would indicate readiness for further academic or vocational education or whether they can perform certain job tasks as demonstrated through various kinds of standardized tests required for certification in a certain skill area.

Diagnosis. Once in a classroom, teachers often also prepare their own assessment processes to determine what students already know about the content area and to get a better sense of language and other instructional needs.

In selecting assessment tools, Thomas, Bird, and Grover (1992b) point out that it is impor-

tant to consider such factors as whether they are designed for adults, whether they assess the appropriate language or skill areas, whether the measurement approach is appropriate for the purpose, and whether the instruments are technically sound.

Commercially Available Tests

Commercially available tests (informally known as standardized tests) commonly used in vocational ESL programs include adult basic education tests designed for native speakers of English and ESL tests designed for those who speak English as a second language.

The most popular ABE tests include the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) and the Adult Basic Learning Examination (ABLE), which are given to measure general reading ability, and the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS), which measures whether a person can complete certain competency tasks and also measures listening comprehension. In addition, another reading test asking students to perform everyday tasks related to document, prose, and quantitative literacy, the Test of Applied Literacy (TALS), has recently been released (Wrigley, 1993, p. 14).

Adult vocational ESL programs also commonly administer various ESL tests designed for adults. No single one of these tests, however, is able to meet the needs of all students. *The Basic English Skills Test (BEST)* (Center for Applied Linguistics, 1989) primarily measures basic survival skills in listening and conversation. This test is used throughout the country in programs serving lower-level students and those with relatively little schooling. A useful factor is that the scores have been correlated to a set of Student Performance Levels (SPLs) that have given programs a language through which to talk about the needs of students of varying levels. The test, however, is less able to assess students with advanced levels of English. *The Comprehensive English Language Skills Assessment* (CELSA) is used to assess familiarity with English structures in context and how well a student can deal with written English texts at varying levels of difficulty. In at least one state (Illinois), this test has been approved by the State Department of Education as an assessment of an ESL students' "ability to benefit," a requirement for obtaining Pell grants (Wrigley, 1993, p. 15). The *Test of English as a Foreign Language* (TOEFL) is the most comprehensive of the standardized ESL tests. It is used primarily for admissions and placement purposes in colleges and universities and is only appropriate for advanced-level ESL learners. Many community colleges may also use the *Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency* as a placement test to determine if ESL students are ready for academic courses. It tests grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension.

Within vocational education, tests of oral proficiency have also been developed for vocational students. *The Bilingual Vocational Oral Proficiency Test*, developed in 1979, measures English language skills in listening and speaking. The content and language of the test is geared to the context of vocational education instruction (Melton Peninsula, 1979). Recently, the U.S. Department of Education funded a research project to develop the *Adult Rating of Oral English* (AROE) (Zehler & DiCerbo, 1995) and to examine its reliability and validity as a measure of oral English proficiency of secondary and adult LEP vocational students. The AROE is a rating matrix completed by teachers on the basis of their observations of their students' use of English across a range of classroom situations. It is made up of eleven components organized into two matrices. Each component is described in terms of six levels of proficiency from zero to five. Since the AROE does not require specific testing sessions with students and makes only limited demands

on program resources, it may be a particularly useful tool to many programs.

The Gatekeeping Function of Tests

The issue of how tests are used as gatekeepers to keep hard-to-serve students out of vocational training is of considerable concern. (See Hempstead, 1990, for a broader discussion of this issue.) Many vocational schools have entry requirements based on achieving a grade-level equivalent on commercially available tests. In addition, recent federal legislation requires that colleges select a test from an approved list and that a certain performance level on that test be used to determine a student's ability to benefit from college study. Students not meeting the required level are ineligible for federal financial aid such as Pell Grants. No formal studies have been undertaken to ascertain the relationship between test scores and a limited English proficient student's ability to benefit from vocational training. According to some experts, LEP vocational students can often perform tasks involving highly technical language and literacy materials when they learn them in the context of the tasks to be performed. Although students' assessed reading level may be below the level of the material, they can sometimes handle difficult vocabulary and materials effectively because of familiarity with the context, past experience with the terminology, or the repetitive nature of the reading and writing tasks associated with the job.

Vocational Aptitude and Interest Tests

Vocational programs may also administer a wide variety of vocational aptitude and interest tests, most of them designed for native speakers of English. Programs serving LEP students may or may not utilize such tests. There exist various kinds of career ability placement tests including occupational aptitude and interest surveys, pictorial inventories of careers, and various tests of abilities such as hand tool dexterity tests, clerical abilities batteries, spacial relations tests, and safety awareness tests. These may be pencil and paper or computerized tests. In addition, a series of tests exist designed for the purpose of measuring learning styles. Many programs administer a wide variety of mathematics tests, depending on the requirements of the skill area, as well (Fiske & Todd, 1994).

Alternative Assessment

The number of vocational programs exploring the use of alternative assessment tools is increasing. Often developed to match closely what is being taught in the program, these tests provide information of use to both teachers and students. In 1994, *Classroom Strategies for Assessing Limited English Proficient Students in Vocational Programs: A Resource Handbook* was published as part of a project commissioned by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Vocational and Adult Education to explore the kinds of assessment strategies vocational programs for LEP students' use (Fiske and Todd, 1994).

Among the alternatives addressed by Fiske and Todd are cloze format tests, rating scales, and portfolio assessment. A cloze test presents the reader with an altered written text. The reader uses a variety of global reading strategies to comprehend the passage in order to put it back into its correct form. Generally speaking, some pattern is selected for deleting words from the text. For example, in a classic cloze test, every *nth* word is randomly deleted (see Figure 4-14). In the so-called rational deletion cloze, the teacher may select specific words, such as technical vocabulary, to be deleted. Cloze tests are most commonly used for assessing reading comprehension levels and sometimes for placement in programs.

An auto mechanic is tuning up a car. As she is working on the car she discovers that the windshield washers are not working. She calls the owner and he __1__ the mechanic to repair them.

The __2__ must first find the cause __3__ the problem. She checks her repair __4__ and finds these troubleshooting suggestions:

1. __5__ fluid tank. Is it full?
2. Check hoses. __6__ they damaged, loose, or kinked? Are __7__ plugged up?
3. Check electrical connections. Are the __8__ loose?
4. Check wiper/washer switch. Does __9__ work?

Figure 4-14 **Sample of a Classic Cloze Test**

From Fiske, K. & Todd, S. (1994). *Classroom Strategies for Assessing Limited English Proficient Students in Vocational Programs: A Resource Handbook*, p. 6-2. Chevy Chase, MD: Crosspaths Management Systems.

Rating scales, indicating how well a task or behavior is being performed on a continuum of possible levels, are another common tool used in vocational programs with limited English proficient students. This tool has been used for specific task performance, for coursework competencies, and for measurement of career competencies across an integrated curriculum. Rating scales can also be used effectively as a means for self-appraisal in a counseling situation, for example. A key drawback is that such ratings can be very subjective. There exists potential for abuse or discrimination since one instructor may judge performance very differently from another. An example of a rating scale used in a VESL context is found in Figure 4-15.

Portfolios are another teaching and assessment tool that have grown in popularity in recent years. Portfolios are compilations of products that demonstrate the learning process that has led to certain acquired skills. (Fiske & Todd, 1994). Often they include a wide variety of students' work that is dated and kept together in a folder, including student writing, performance assessment results, diagrams, blueprints, drawings, instructor observations, comments, anecdotes, lists of reading completed or tapes listened to, print-outs of results of computer-assisted instructional feedback, and other materials. See Figure 4-16 for an example of a portfolio sign-off sheet used by one vocational program.

DATA ENTRY VESL COMPETENCIES

Rating Scale:

4 - Skilled - Uses English appropriately without prompting or assistance: is easily understood; almost always uses correct grammar, spelling, and pronunciation.

3 - Moderately skilled - Uses English appropriately, but may require occasional prompting or assistance; usually easy to understand - good control of grammar, spelling, and pronunciation.

2 - Acceptable skill - Uses English in a generally appropriate manner; requires some prompting or assistance; can be understood, but may take some effort - mistakes in grammar, spelling, and pronunciation do not usually inhibit ability to be understood; mistakes may be numerous.

1 - Limited skill - Has difficulty using English appropriately; often requires prompting or assistance; often difficult to understand – does not control grammar, spelling, or pronunciation; mistakes inhibit ability to be understood.

0 - No skill/experience in this area - Cannot use English appropriately; does not respond to prompting or assistance; extremely difficult or impossible to understand - pronunciation may be almost incomprehensible. Use this rating when student has not attended corresponding classes and has not made up work.

COMPETENCIES TO BE RATED	4	3	2	1	0
ORIENTATION					
1. Introduce oneself/state background.					
2. Ask information question.					
3. Ask for clarification.					
TELEPHONING					
1. Answer phone in office setting.					
2. Give and take a phone message.					
3. Transfer a call.					
4. Report a message.					
5. Use good telephone manners.					
6. React to information.					
7. Terminate the call.					
8. Call for information about a job opening.					
9. Call to request a job application.					
10. Call to make an appointment for an interview.					
11. Ask for clarification of/confirm information in telephone calls.					
12. Follow up an interview by phone.					
13. Understand recorded telephone message on local job hot lines.					
ALPHABETIZING/FILING/ABBREVIATIONS/SPELLING					
1. Alphabetize vocabulary words.					
2. Learn state, territory, street names.					
3. Learn to spell American names.					
4. Learn to spell terminology/words.					
5. Index names.					
SOCIALIZING ON THE JOB					
1. Greet a supervisor, co-worker.					
2. Roleplay a social conversation in English with a supervisor/co-worker.					
3. Compare jobs and countries.					

Figure 4-15 **Data Entry VESL Competencies**

From Fiske, K., & Todd, S. (1994). *Classroom Strategies for Assessing Limited English Proficient Students in Vocational Programs: A Resource Handbook*, p. 7:27. Chevy Chase, MD: Crosspaths Management Systems.

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Portfolio Sign-Off Sheet

Keep this form at the front of your working folder. Check off each item as it is completed. Some pieces need to be reviewed or signed off by your teacher. Space is provided for your teacher's initials.

Student: _____
Class: _____
Date: _____
Teacher: _____

☑ Check off when complete:	Date	Teacher Initials
❑ **Table of Contents**	_____	_____
❑ **Letter of Introduction**	_____	_____
❑ **Career Development Package**	_____	_____
❑ Application for employment or college		
❑ Letter of Recommendation		
❑ Resume		
❑ **Work Samples**	_____	_____
❑ Work Sample #1 and caption	_____	_____
❑ Work Sample #2 and caption	_____	_____
❑ Work Sample #3 and caption	_____	_____
❑ Work Sample #4 and caption	_____	_____
❑ **Research Write-up**	_____	_____
❑ Outline (with teacher comments)	_____	_____
❑ Draft (with teacher comments)	_____	_____
❑ Final write-up	_____	_____
❑ **Supervised Practical Experience Evaluation**	_____	_____

Figure 4-16 **Portfolio Sign-Off Sheet**

From Fiske, K., & Todd, S. (1994). *Classroom Strategies for Assessing Limited English Proficient Students in Vocational Programs: A Resource Handbook*. p. 8-27. Chevy Chase, MD: Crosspaths Management Systems.

Thomas, Bird, and Grover (1992b) describe the use of performance tests to assess a student's abilities to integrate a series of competencies to perform job-related tasks. Often performance tests are given both before and after a given topic area is covered to assess mastery. See Figure 4-17 for an example of a performance-based test that rates the competencies needed by a receptionist to take telephone messages. Like most performance-based assessments, this test can be administered through a classroom simulation.

Programs continue to work toward establishing greater reliability and validity in assessing students' work. As Burt and Keenan assert (1995, p. 2), "Current practice and theory seem to recommend using a combination of commercially available tests and program-developed assessment instruments." A key challenge is to develop assessment frameworks that "are general enough to allow for program comparison and flexible enough to take into account local program context" (Wrigley, 1993, p. 18). Much progress has been made in the last few years; however, programs are severely hampered by a lack of funds to develop these tools and by a lack of a system of coordination that might allow materials developed at one site to be field tested by other programs.

Support Services

Support services for LEP students encompass a wide range of activities and utilize many different kinds of staff. Support services may begin with the *outreach* process mentioned earlier, which may be conducted with the assistance of bilingual program counselors. During the *intake* phase, special counselors may help with financial aid or determine their eligibility for federally or state-funded programs. *Initial assessment* may be conducted by teachers in small programs, but more often in larger programs it is administered by special staff persons. At community colleges, students may also receive *academic advising and support*. This may be undertaken by instructors; however, students may also be sent to a special *learning lab* staffed with bilingual tutors to get extra help when they need it. Programs may offer some form of *personal counseling services* that will assist with personal adjustment needs and may provide referrals to services such as child care, substance abuse clinics, family counseling, emergency assistance, and legal services. *Career counseling* and *job placement* are key elements of any program and should be integrated throughout the program from career awareness to career interest assessment to internships or work-study programs and finally to preparation for job interviews and job placement. In successful programs, job developers make links with business and industry and set up interviews for students during the later stages of their vocational program. There is follow-up with the student during the early months after job placement. Figure 4-18 describes services available in a comprehensive community college program.

Immigrant students may have many special needs. Many may only know about the work experiences and options that have been available to their relatives or friends. They may not know the range of career options available to them, the qualifications needed for entering a given occupation, the earning possibilities of various jobs, or the labor demand for different kinds of occupations. Some may overestimate their abilities to achieve a certain career goal; others may underestimate their skills and abilities. Students from countries where there are fewer options in career paths may need to be counseled concerning the concept of career mobility: that one can move up within a company once an initial job is gained. Many may

Performance Test for Telephone Role Play

Task: Record telephone messages

Performance objective: In a classroom role play, record all the information for a telephone message on a "While You Were Out" message pad.

Related communicative competencies:

- Understand speech over the phone.
- Report/write factual information.
- Ask for clarification.
- Ask for additional/complete information.
- Ask for/record the spelling of names.
- Read, understand, and use message pad.

ITEM	CRITERIA FOR FULL CREDIT	0	1	2	NOTES
1. To	first & last names				
2. Date	month, day, & year				
3. Time	hour & minutes, circle AM or PM				
4. M	complete M (Mr., Mrs., Ms.), first & last names				
5. of	name of organization				
6. Area code & exchange	area code & exchange, extension if given				
7. Call box check	check appropriate box(es)				
8. Message, content	include all information given				
9. Message, mechanics	correct spelling & grammar, clear & legible				
10. Operator	first & last names				
				TOTAL SCORE:	

Rating:
0=missing
1=partial
2=complete

SCORE
Criteria for Competency
20=full competency
16-19=minimal acceptable competency
below 16=below competency

Trainee:_____ Date:_____

Attempt:_____ Trainer's Signature:_____

Figure 4-17 **Performance Test for Telephone Role Play**

From Thomas, R., Bird, L., & Grover, J. (1992b). *Serving Vocational ESL Students*, p. 79. Washington, DC: American Association of Community Colleges.

	Entering the College Program	Early in the Program	Later in the Program	Exiting the Program
Outreach and Admissions	Active recruiting Coordinating events Bilingual response to student inquiry Process applications	Welcome students Introduce key college staff Peer/family recruitment	Explain more advanced opportunities Involve students as tutors/mentors	Involve LEP alumni Involve LEP student employers
Financial Aid	Explain availability of funds Test for ability-to-benefit Review residency requirements Stress application deadlines Coordinate resources	Announce any changes Next application deadline Coordinate resources	Explain transitions Plan for completion and exit	Coordinate resource transitions (insurance, childcare, etc.)
Academic Advising and Support	Evaluate assessment Establish individual educational plans Initiate tutorial support	Evaluate placement Adjust individual educational plans Monitor tutorial support	Plan for completion or transfer Augment elective choices Refine critical skills Review educational plan	Maintain an open door for future educational advancement
Counseling Services and Referrals	Assess background Initiate available college-based services	Monitor early attendance Evaluate college-based services and referrals Develop the relationship Expand the peer/mentor network	Foster success Manage stress Begin transition away from campus-based support Encourage self-reliance	Monitor transition services Congratulate the achievement
Career Counseling and Job Placement	Introduce workplace expectations Initiate career assessment Establish goals Evaluate match of goals, abilities, and local economy	Continue career exploration Adjust goals and plans Initiate contact with related employers	Develop employability skills Active involvement with potential employers Initiate alumni mentors	Encourage LEP alumni to mentor current students Evaluate graduates

Figure 4-18 **Support Service Requirements at Different Stages**

From Thomas, R., Bird, L., & Grover, J. (1992b). *Serving Vocational ESL Students*, p. 71. Washington, DC: American Association of Community Colleges.

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as yet be unaware of the importance English language proficiency can play in meeting their goals. In some countries, there are fewer options in career and occupational paths; students need to be made aware of the options available to them in this country. Students may also need help in prioritizing their time according to Western standards. Some may feel torn between the responsibilities of school and cultural demands stressing the importance of taking care of older family members.

Various approaches have been used to organize a network of support services for students. Thomas, Bird, and Grover (1992b) outline three approaches. In the first, a case manager is assigned to each LEP student. The job of the case manager is to address all of the student's support needs. This approach is used in many community colleges, as well as within many JOBS, JTPA, and refugee-funded programs. The advantage of this approach is that the student can form a close relationship with a single case worker who should provide a coordinated plan tailored to the individual student. However, the quality of services is then highly dependent on the background and commitment of a single individual. In addition, many case workers have large caseloads that make it difficult to reach everyone at important stages such as registration and end-of-program placement. Special centers are another way in which support services can be organized. In this case, support services are provided at a centralized site in the community college or vocational school and managed as an integrated system. Faculty and staff at the center are cross-trained to make sure a strong referral network is created. A special support center for LEP students might offer career awareness, financial aid, registration assistance, tutoring, and job placement information all at a single site. This approach has been successful for many women's centers within community colleges and is, in essence, the approach of many bilingual vocational training programs. Finally, the third "mainstream" approach simply encourages students to seek out various offices to meet their individual needs on their own. Some of the various offices may have bilingual staff, but it is up to the students themselves to negotiate their various needs. Although some programs offer initial orientations to the various services available, it is very possible for at least some of the students' needs to go unmet in this approach.

Staffing and Staff Development

Working as a VESL instructor or aide requires a good deal of skill. Instructors must not only have a background in how adults develop and acquire proficiency in a second language but must also either know or be prepared to learn about vocational content areas. Teachers must use appropriate teaching methodologies for working with adults, linking what is taught to students' immediate needs and background experiences. In many cases, instructors must develop an understanding of how adults acquire literacy and math in order to teach basic skills. And since many VESL instructors must develop their own curricula, they need to be well-grounded in lesson planning and curriculum sequencing.

Vocational instructors need special preparation to work with LEP students. They must learn how to modify the language and teaching strategies they use in the classroom, to adapt written material to be more appropriate for LEP students, to work with and supervise bilingual aides, and to collaborate in curriculum development and planning with the VESL instructor.

These would be demanding qualifications in any context. However, they are particularly problematic given the limited staff-development opportunities in adult education. Staff qualifications across the field are very uneven. Although some programs do have highly qualified teachers and administrators, many of whom are full-time professionals, in the majority of programs most of the ESL and VESL teaching staff work on a part-time basis with few benefits, little job security, and limited opportunity for professional development. Wrigley (1993) has noted that, nationwide, only about 25% of ESL employees are full-time teachers. There is limited access to career ladders that might allow teachers to move up into positions of increasing responsibility.

In general, staff development for ESL teachers has been found to be limited mostly to short pre-service training sessions, single workshops, or short conferences. Although studies have been undertaken on the status of general ESL staff development (see Kutner, 1992), no broad assessment of the conditions for training for VESL instructors currently exists. Two programs funded through the Bilingual Vocational Instructor Training Program have, however, made important strides in developing training modules and other activities to meet the needs of programs implementing bilingual vocational training. PAVE, based at El Camino College in Torrance, California, established a consortium with seven other area community colleges to Promote Access to Vocational Education for LEP students. Each college had a PAVE facilitator who, with the support of the group, began PAVE activities on campus. PAVE facilitators received special "train the trainer" workshops, which were documented in *A Guide to PAVE Facilitator Training* (Franklin, 1995). They, in turn, conducted training workshops in their own colleges and organized other activities to expand and improve services. PAVE also held conferences to disseminate strategies and demonstration activities to other colleges. Similarly, the Capacity Building for States (CBS) project based at Northern Illinois University conducted regional inservice training for trainers. *Building Competencies to Serve LEP Vocational Students* (Lopez-Valadez & Reed, 1989) documents many of their training activities. These projects were two of the few major sources for innovation within the area of staff development for the field; however, with funding for the Bilingual Vocational Training Programs ended, the future of these types of endeavors is uncertain.

Program Evaluation

The final category essential for program planning is program evaluation. Within the field, there is a strong consensus that documenting the positive impacts of programs is essential in gaining further support; many programs recommend hiring external evaluators to design and implement evaluation plans. The results of ongoing internal evaluations undertaken by project staff can also be useful tools. The evaluation should help program administrators answer questions such as the following (Thomas, Bird, & Grover, 1992b, p. 84):

- Is the program fulfilling the purpose for which it was designed?
- Was the program implemented as designed or were adaptations made in the design?
- What were the reasons for the changes made?
- How is the program benefiting students?
- What has contributed to program success? Weaknesses?
- What changes should be made in the program to make it more effective?

Many of the overall planning guides mentioned earlier contain sections on planning evaluations. Fleishman, Hanberry, and Rivera also produced an *Evaluation Guide for Bilingual Vocational Training* (1987) that provides some useful suggestions.

The ability to present to funders, planners, and employers data such as the number of students who complete the program, their job placement rates, changes in their earning potential, and the number receiving promotions since initial reports could do much to promote the usefulness of programs; yet a search of the literature yields few examples of programs collecting such data. An important exception is the Consortium for Employment Training (CET). Studies by the Rockefeller Foundation and by the Manpower Research Development Center, which have closely tracked CET's impact, have been effective in helping the program to expand; today the CET continues to collect its own student-outcome data (see Box 4W). Houston Community College in Texas and Lansing Community College in Michigan are other examples of programs that have conducted extensive evaluations. This information, reported to community college officials, has been valuable in helping these programs to continue and expand.

Learning From Experience

As this chapter has shown, there is great potential for improving vocational instruction for limited English proficient adults. An effective job-training program that targets a very needy population more than pays for itself in taxes paid by graduates and public funds not expended for welfare and unemployment payments. For example, in 1989, the average annual wage of CET students prior to enrolling in training was $6,003. The projected average annual wage of CET 1989 graduates was $12,054. Graduates of these programs will pay over $6 million in taxes alone, far more than they would have paid at their pre-training salaries (Lee, 1995).

Providing effective training, however, requires an investment. Strong institutional support is needed to develop programs that allow for a solid program of concurrent language and vocational training. Support services must be made available, and good teachers must be given time to coordinate services to prepare a worthwhile instructional program.

Many innovative programs have begun to explore ways to get limited English proficient students into vocational training programs sooner through concurrent instructional programs or various kinds of bridging projects. Programs are seeking new and better ways to help students make transitions between programs and assess their progress as they move through the system. But the "bright lights" are few and far between. Across the country, most students spend many semesters in traditional ESL programs before ever getting a chance at vocational training. Most drop out and get jobs without the training that could benefit them, their employers, and the economy as a whole. Clearly, within the new reform movement, ways need to be found for these outstanding programs to be shared with other states and localities.

The Value of Evaluation Studies — Box 4W

A 1990 Rockefeller Foundation study of basic education and employment for minority female single parents compared the Consortium for Employment Training (CET) design of integrating basic skills, language development, and vocational training with other programs using more traditional models. The results showed that the CET model yielded better jobs and higher wages for a higher proportion of participants. It led to a 27% increase in employment and 47% higher pay for employees. More recently, another study by the Manpower Development Research Corporation examined the economic statistics and employment of disadvantaged high-school dropouts at training programs nationwide. The study followed students for four years after they had completed a program that cost approximately $4,500. Only graduates from CET had substantial earnings increases—more than $6,700 over four years—when compared with a control group. Graduates from other programs did not have statistically significant improvements in pay compared with control groups. Since these studies were conducted, the CET model has been widely reported in major newspapers and business magazines. In 1992, CET was asked by the U.S. Department of Labor to replicate this model in ten sites around the country, and representatives from other communities have begun to study the model (Lee, 1995).

The Value of Employment Training — Box 4X

"CET graduates are not high-paid professionals or captains of industry. They are not listed in Who's Who and do not have six-figure incomes. Like the relay runner who is passed the baton 100 yards behind all other competitors, no matter how hard he runs, the gap is just too great to catch up. But graduating from CET does get them and their families into the race. There are no secrets to success when you lack an education, do not speak English, and do not have marketable skills. You must work hard to overcome each of theses barriers and then work even harder when you get a job. And maybe, if you do a good job, you'll get a raise, a promotion, and more stability over time. You'll be able to raise your kids in one place so that they can attend school and maybe go to college and move up in the relay. And perhaps they or their children will finally bring home some gold medals. Medals or not, each of our graduates is a success. They have moved themselves and their families a notch or two up the ladder. Some have gone great distances as the first of their families to leave agricultural work. Later their children attended universities—extraordinary gains from one generation to the next. We are proud to have lent them a hand when it was needed and to have contributed to the hard-fought successes earned by our students" (Center for Employment Training, 1993, p. 8).

A Short-Term Training Program — Box 4Y

The Career Resources Development Center, a community-based organization in San Francisco, offers short-term training programs that provide concurrent VESL and job-skills training. The program includes internship components for clerical, accounting, financial services, and medical office workers. The program reports significantly higher JTPA placement rates than more traditional programs in the San Francisco area (Career Resources Development Center, 1992).

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A Bilingual Vocational Training Program — Box 4Z

Houston Community College has three Bilingual Vocational Training (BVT) programs: air conditioning and refrigeration, cosmetology, and electricity. The air conditioning and refrigeration program consists of three component courses of 480 hours each, including class and shop time: basic, domestic, and commercial refrigeration and air conditioning. The basic course is taught entirely in Spanish, the domestic course is taught increasingly in English, and the commercial course is taught entirely in English. The theory classrooms are located right next to the lab where hands-on work is done. There is an accompanying VESL component and a BVT counselor on site. Instructors design many of their own materials and stress job-related language and communication (Thomas, Bird, & Grover, 1992a).

Large Multiple-Service Centers — Box 4AA

Some large, well-established programs, such as the New York Association for New Americans in New York City, are able to offer a wide variety of courses. Long- and short-term programs are available for recent arrivals who possess professional or semi-professional training in their home country but who lack an awareness of the U.S. professional system and are not English proficient. A one-year medical laboratory technician program includes extensive training and a 6-month internship at a local hospital or private laboratory. A 13-month math/science teacher-training program is also available for immigrants with a bachelor's degree or higher in math or science. Persons with an engineering or mechanical manufacturing background can take a 12-week mechanical-manufacturing technician course or a 19-week environmental-monitoring technician course. Short-term training is also available for refugees and immigrants with more limited educational backgrounds. They can take a 10-week home-health-aide program, or five-week courses to become a security guard or a taxi driver, as well as a wide variety of other courses (New York Association for New Americans, 1994).

Many Approaches to VESL — Box 4BB

Lindsey Hopkins Technical Education Center in Miami, Florida, offers five levels of VESL prior to vocational training. After Level 3, students concentrate on an employability/skills course. During the last stages of VESL instruction, they enroll in cluster VESL classes in Health Occupations, Business Technology Education, or Industrial Education (Lindsey Hopkins Technical Education Center, 1995).

A Concurrent Pre-Vocational Program — Box 4CC

Bunker Hill Community College in the Boston area has offered ESL for many years. Traditionally, students have had to complete five levels of ESL before entering vocational programs. A new occupation-specific ESL model has recently been developed. Students can enroll in this class beginning after their third semester while at the same time taking courses in electronics and allied health. The program has found that these programs have completion rates of over 90%, compared to completion rates of only 50% in the regular mainstream courses (Wrigley, Chisman, & Ewen, 1993).

Chapter Five

The Promise of ESL in the Workplace

A small clothing factory decides to retool to offer a wider variety of sportswear. The production staff will now begin to work in teams and follow customized work orders for an assortment of new products. After the project is initiated, managers find that many employees are unable to participate in the work teams due to a lack of English.

A local hotel would like to promote one of its desk clerks to customer service representative. She is flattered but reluctant to take the job because it would involve making oral reports at the weekly management meeting. Although her English is good, sometimes people complain that her "accent" gets in the way of understanding.

A convenience store chain has noticed that its profits are down due to improper inventory control at the local stores. After an investigation, it is found that many of the clerks who are limited English proficient have not been trained in the proper record-keeping processes, and their initial retraining efforts have not been successful.

Throughout the United States, a growing number of employers are finding that providing education at the worksite is the best way to achieve their goals to improve productivity, increase teamwork and quality control, use technology better, and respond to the changing demands of customers in a growing service economy. Even entry-level jobs now require greater levels of skill, whether they be the ability to use computerized equipment in the manufacturing industry or to communicate effectively within the service sector. Those with higher levels of education need even better communication skills. As the proportion of new workers who are immigrants and refugees has grown, employers have become increasingly aware of the importance of language training, both for entry-level and more skilled workers. In fact, since the inability to communicate in English is so immediately visible (as opposed to a lack of reading and writing skills that many workers are able to hide more effectively), ESL classes are often the first kind of adult education programs offered by a company.

As the number and variety of programs grows, employers and educators have begun to tackle some of the difficult issues associated with workplace education: What outcomes can be expected from programs? Are they cost-effective? Who pays? Should the curriculum focus on the short-term needs of the employer or the long-term needs of the workers? What is the worker investment? How do we keep supervisors and management involved? What responsibilities do employers have to promote a work environment that is equitable to workers from a variety of cultural backgrounds? Workplace education has been seen by many as one of the bright spots in adult education, a growing source for innovation and creativity within the field. Yet many contradictory and complex questions remain to be resolved as workplace education begins to represent a larger part of the adult education equation.

This chapter provides an overview of the current status of workplace education for limited English proficient adults in the United States. It includes a discussion of the various steps involved in setting up an ESL workplace program, from establishing a partnership, to conducting a needs analysis, to judging the program's effectiveness.

Steps in Setting Up a Workplace ESL Program

A growing number of materials now exist to help programs identify the steps required to establish a workplace program. Two of the most well known of these are *The Workplace Basics Training Manual* developed by the American Society of Training and Development (Carnevale, Gainer, & Meltzer, 1990) and *Worker-Centered Learning: A Union Guide to Workplace Literacy* released by the AFL-CIO Human Resources Development Institute (Sarmiento & Kay, 1990). They were developed primarily with native speakers of English in mind, but their basic principles are useful to anyone planning a program.

There are a few good resources specifically directed toward planners of programs serving adult ESL learners. One of the most thorough and insightful of these is *Teaching English in the Workplace* by Mary Ellen Belfiore and Barbara Burnaby (1995). This revised version of a 1984 edition with the same title addresses many concrete issues related to program planning. Although developed by educators in Canada, most of the issues addressed are relevant and current to the experiences of workplace ESL educators in the United States. Another resource is *Job-Related Language Training for Limited English Proficient Employers*, produced by the Development Assistance Corporation (Thomas, Grover, Cichon, Bird & Harns, 1991). This handbook provides detailed steps for each planning stage as well as many sample materials and examples from the field, based on a U.S. context. *Planning, Implementing, and Evaluating Workplace ESL Programs* (Grognet, 1996) and *From the Classroom to the Workplace: Teaching ESL to Adults* (Center for Applied Linguistics, 1983) also contain good information for program planners.

Several educational service providers have produced materials documenting their experiences establishing programs. *English in the Workplace for Hotel Housekeepers: Manual and Curriculum Guide* (Castillo, Romstedt, Silc, & Vanderhoff-Chambi, 1990), written by teachers with the Fairfax County Public Schools in Virginia, has carefully documented their decision-making process and its consequences for program implementation. The Workplace Education Division of The Center in Des Plaines, Illinois, has produced many materials based on experiences with projects around the state. Among these are *Best Practices for Quality Basic Skills Programs in the Manufacturing Industry* (Mrowicki, Jones, Locsin, Lynch, & Olivi, 1994) and *Workplace Literacy Core Curriculum for Beginning ESL* (Mrowicki, Locsin, & Lynch, 1990).

Across all the resource guides, a fairly universal set of program implementation steps is suggested. Figure 5-1 illustrates the steps. The first step involves the initial contact between potential business/industry and educational partners. During this stage, organizational commitment must be solidified, a joint planning and implementation team formed, and some general understanding as to the overall purpose of the project must be reached. Step 2 involves planning and implementing a needs assessment process. The third step involves the design of an initial training framework and plan for program implementation that can be shared and discussed first with each of the partners and later, during Step 4, with the

program participants. Step 5 entails the actual implementation of the training component. How programs organize this implementation process varies significantly depending on their purposes and approach to workplace teaching and learning. Although an initial curriculum framework has been outlined, the details are left to be filled in during a process of needs assessment and negotiation with learners. Since this model assumes a learner-centered approach, the curriculum cannot be completely decided in advance. This model contrasts with one that might be proposed by advocates of a functional context approach where everything is planned in advance, based primarily on the tasks identified during the needs analysis. Finally, the last step in all the models is some form of program evaluation and reporting of the project results. The sections that follow will discuss each of these steps in detail, exploring the assumptions behind them and looking at how programs have put these activities into practice.

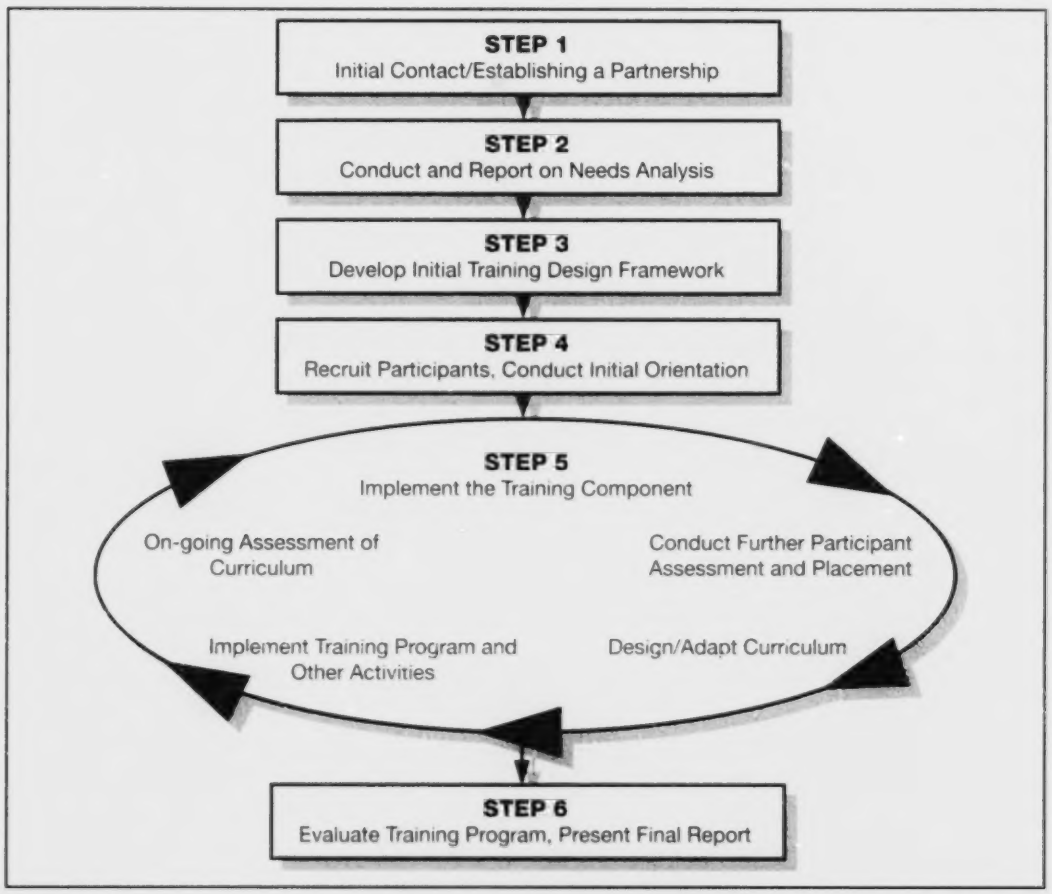

Figure 5-1 **Planning Stages For a Workplace ESL Program**

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Establishing the Partnership: Four Models

Workplace instructional programs usually involve a partnership between an employer and another organization or at least one more group of individuals, whether it be an educational institution, a union, a private contractor, or an in-house education staff. Four basic models predominate (Grognet, 1994).

The Workplace–Education Partnership Model

This model, undoubtedly the most common, involves a partnership between some form of educational institution—most commonly a community college, an adult education system, or a private postsecondary institution—and a business or industry. Most of the National Workplace Literacy Programs (funded by the U.S. Department of Education) fall into this category. Basic State Grant funds for adult education may be used for this purpose as well. Many states have funded various initiatives to stimulate development of workplace education programs. Some examples of workplace education partnerships are illustrated below.

The Workplace–Union Partnership Model

To a greater extent than is perhaps generally realized, union-sponsored programs exist around the United States. This commitment, the Business Council for Effective Literacy notes, "is as old as the labor movement itself" (1987, p. 1). Many unions grew with the waves of successive immigration and, over the years, have offered their members English literacy and citizenship classes. (See Rosenblum, 1996, for an historical discussion of union-based workplace ESL instruction.) Now with the nature of jobs changing dramatically, there is a new urgency to worker education. Many unions have initiated collective-bargaining arrangements whereby employers contribute a percentage of their payroll for the training and upgrading of workers. Programs may be jointly administered by unions and management or contracted to private or public education providers. One such model was developed by the United Auto Workers (UAW)-Ford Motor Company. Their Employee Development and Training Program, initiated in 1982, set a pattern for unions in other large industries. A national staff in Dearborn, Michigan, provides a structure through which local programs can identify the interests of their members. Other programs are run by UAW-General Motors, UAW-Chrysler, the United Steelworkers of America, and the Communication Workers of America. The AFL-CIO Human Resources Development Institute provides information and technical assistance regarding basic skills training as well (Business Council for Effective Literacy, 1987).

Some smaller unions have banded together into groups like the Consortium for Worker Education (CWE) to combine educational services and support. Founded in 1985 by the education director of Teamsters Local 237 in New York City, this group organized labor unions to lobby the New York state legislature to secure line-item state funding for worker education programs. Today about 22 unions participate in the CWE, serving over 10,000 union members and their families in work-related basic skills, ESL, and skills training programs. This program is particularly innovative in that it offers both workplace and vocational education, and workers may progress from beginning ESL all the way through graduate school. It is also one of the innovators in the country in offering programs with a strong worker-centered philosophy and hiring teachers sensitive to the struggles of working class students. Class sites vary from union halls and

factories to housing projects and churches (Johnson, 1993; Rosenblum, 1996).

The Workplace–Private Contractor Partnership Model

In recent years, the number of private contractors who offer specialized training in areas related to ESL has also increased. Courses may range from group training for non-English-speaking, entry-level employees to individualized instruction for one or two foreign-born professionals or technicians. They may cover such topics as total quality management (TQM) for ESL employees, accent improvement, cross-cultural training, or business writing. Most often, training is short-term, lasting just a few weeks or months. Many businesses see an advantage in this approach, since they are familiar with using private contractors for other kinds of training activities. Private contractors often make it a point to learn how to "speak the language" of business, and many

Workplace–Education Partnership — Box 5A

The Pima County Workplace Education Partnership is a collaboration between the Pima County Adult Education Department, the Arizona Consortium for Education and Training, the Southern Arizona Innkeepers Association, and the Tucson Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce. Originally funded in 1988 through the National Workplace Literacy Program, the project has now transitioned from a partial to a total fee-for-service program. Participating worksites include manufacturing companies, education institutions, hotels, casinos, and hospitals. About a third of the 2500 workers who have participated have been non-native speakers of English (Hellman & Woolley, 1996).

Preparing Hotel and Restaurant Workers — Box 5B

Project EXCEL is a partnership between the Career Resources Development Center, the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employers Union, and five major hotels and five restaurants in the San Francisco area. In 1992, approximately 750 workers participated in this large program. The program provides 1) hotel workplace literacy, 2) restaurant workplace literacy, and 3) workplace preparation for unemployed LEP workers seeking jobs in the tourism industry. The program employs carefully sequenced modular curricula that are based on job-specific literacy audits conducted at each site (Career Resources Development Center, 1992).

The Union Role — Box 5C

A 1987 UAW Local 259 newspaper article, entitled *Education Classes Come to the Shops*, describes the benefits of union education. "Our students not only are learning basic and advanced skills of reading, writing, and math, and science and history, but participate actively in developing curriculum ideas. They write oral histories of their lives, their cultural background, the union experience, their lives in the shop....Students describe how they are beginning to speak up at union meetings, how they now can talk to their boss and the landlord and the doctor, how the classes give them a greater feeling of self-confidence, how proud their families are of their achievement. The program is a labor of love for our union, and we are committed to expanding it" (BCEL, 1987, p. 5).

come from the business sector or from backgrounds in human resources development. Often they are able to tailor courses specifically to the needs of the employer and to maintain a degree of flexibility that programs with public funding may not be able to achieve.

Increasingly, community colleges are developing departments through which contracting can take place directly with employers. In *A Practical Guide to Conducting Customized Workforce Training* (Kantor, 1994) a number of authors discuss issues related to the design and delivery of such customized services. Human resource development magazines also periodically carry articles describing successful workplace ESL programs offered by private trainers who may or may not be connected with an educational institution (see Hayflich & Lomperis, 1992).

The ESL Basic Education within a Workplace Training Division Model

Although less commonly because of the cost to the company, a few larger companies maintain training divisions with basic skills and ESL as one component. For some, such as the Polaroid Corporation (see Box 5E), the training division represents part of a broad mission of the organization to build capacity from within. Other companies with large numbers of minority workers at varying levels of English language proficiency find that having one or more full-time ESL staff members available gives them flexibility and saves time in the long run. StorageTek, a computer information storage company in Colorado, for example, has had a full-time ESL coordinator and two full-time basic skills teachers. Having switched to a total quality management approach, the company has found that this instruction has allowed them to continue to employ many workers who might otherwise have been laid off due to a lack of language and basic skills (Burt, in press).

These models illustrate the most common patterns; however, as the examples show, the collaborations are often not so clear cut. A single project may involve several businesses, a union, a local chamber of commerce, and educational providers, who in turn may subcontract with private contractors! More varieties of partnerships grow every year as programs respond to their own unique set of needs.

The Partnership Arrangement

After initial contact is made between the partners, a joint planning and implementation team is usually formed, made up of representatives from each partner group. Business or union partners generally appoint one employee to be the key contact person responsible for the program. In large organizations, someone from the human resources or staff development department is usually selected. In smaller businesses, the contact person could be anyone from a general manager to one of the floor supervisors. Unions may appoint a shop steward or member of the local executive board as their representative. Most education providers and private educational contractors send a senior administrator to initiate the partnership relationship. An educational coordinator will be given day-to-day responsibility for project management and will hire teachers after a firm commitment to offer instruction is made. In small programs, the educational coordinator and the teacher may be the same person.

Many experienced program developers point out the importance of making sure all the key stakeholders at the business or industry are aware of plans to implement a project and, whenever possible, involved in the planning process. For example, much time and effort can be lost if upper level management does not initially approve the general nature of the program to be implemented. Similarly, the

cooperation of on-line supervisors is essential for the success of the project; informing them after the fact that they must send employees to classes during work hours can cause countless conflicts and sporadic attendance during the implementation stage. In a union-sponsored program, it may be strategically important to inform regional as well as local leaders. Becoming familiar with the channels of communication within the organization is an essential early step (Belfiore & Burnaby, 1995). Figure 5-2, developed by the Workplace Education Division of The Center–Resources for Education in Des Plaines, Illinois, illustrates common roles of partners.

Funding the Project

Funding for projects also varies considerably. Little data currently exist concerning the extent to which the private sector is investing in workplace ESL projects. A survey done by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (U.S. Department of Labor, 1994) revealed that of the 12,000 businesses surveyed, only 3% offered training in basic skills or in ESL. Businesses and unions have typically relied on the availability of public funds to initiate their projects, although after public funding has ended, they may continue the project—usually on a smaller scale. In projects where federal monies were involved, federal, state, and local grants provided funding for project planning and curriculum development, including part, if not all, of the initial needs analyses, the salaries of teachers and the educational administrator, educational materials, and final project evaluation. The business partners provided matching funds in the form of the time of the business contact persons; classroom space; equipment such as phones;

Developing Customized Programs for Business — Box 5D

In Denver, Colorado, the Spring Institute for International Studies offers customized programs for businesses requiring communication in English. They offer programs both in the United States and overseas. The materials they develop are competency based, communicative and cooperative in focus, and learner centered. Among their local clients have been a baby products manufacturer, a book publisher, and a local hospital (Spring Institute, 1994).

Making a Commitment to Employees — Box 5E

Dr. Erwin Land, founder of Polaroid Corporation, believed strongly that "the function of industry is not just the making of goods; the function of industry is the development of people." This philosophy has been the guiding principle behind Polaroid's long-term commitment to employee education and career advancement. Their education program, which began in 1961, is the oldest in-house basic skills program in the country and now includes ESL as well as GED and ABE programs. The classes are voluntary and are usually on a combination of company and employee time. Courses include English for the workplace as well as a variety of basic math, geometry, statistics, chemistry, and electronics courses and tutorials designed to accommodate limited English proficient adults. These programs have been effective in allowing entry-level workers to move into more challenging jobs within the company. Many have later gone on to attend higher education through special arrangements between the company and local universities (Polaroid Corporation, 1993, p. 3).

Business	Educational Provider
Identifies the contact person	
Forms a basic skills committee	Facilitates the committee meetings
Makes policy decisions regarding the purpose and scope of the audit	Provides input on policy decisions
Plans a company awareness campaign	Provides input on the company awareness campaign
Conducts the company awareness campaign	Participates in the company awareness campaign
Identifies appropriate managers, supervisors, line staff, and workers to participate in the audit process and schedules interviews	Interviews the key people
Assembles written materials	Analyzes the written materials
Arranges for job observations	Conducts the job literacy task analysis
Reviews the findings	Prepares a report with the findings

Figure 5-2 **Partners' Roles**

Reprinted with permission from Mrowicki, L., et. al. (1994). *Best Practices for Quality Basic Skills Programs in the Manufacturing Industry*, p. 13. Des Plaines, IL: The Center–Resources in Education.

copy machines and computers; paid employee release time; and other contributions. It appears, however, that as public funds diminish for workplace programs, it will increasingly fall to the business partner to cover all costs in providing instruction in the workplace (Burt, 1995; Hellman & Woolley, 1996).

Various arrangements are made concerning who pays for the employees' time while attending the course. A common pattern is for the business to pay 50 percent of the employees' salary while they attend classes. For example, a class for hospital employees working from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. may be offered from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. two days a week. The hospital pays for the first hour of their employee's time the employees are "off the clock" the second hour. There are, however, numerous examples of businesses paying full wages for class time or awarding cash bonuses for employees who complete the course.

Negotiating for Educational Priorities

Business or union sponsors may recognize the need for improved communication at the workplace, but they may see the problem very narrowly, based on an immediate problem they face. They may be more or less aware of the extent to which this problem is embedded in a complex communicative context at the worksite involving language, culture, and social relationships. Sponsors may also be unfamiliar with the time it takes to learn a second language, assuming a few weeks' "quick fix" may solve their problem. Often, the initial negotiation process involves educating employers concerning the basics of second language acquisition and what can realistically be expected in a short-term language program. It is

also important that they understand the role of a needs assessment, since many employers may be eager for a program to begin right away. At this point, Belfiore and Burnaby (1995, p. 26) suggest that negotiations for the following be undertaken:

- Paid time for pre- and post-course development work;
- Access to the sponsor's human and material resources, such as supervisory and training personnel, documents, handbooks, etc., for information about the industry, the process, and the product;
- Shared responsibility for determining the number and level of classes, as well as the makeup of each class;
- Shared responsibility for determining a suitable location, hours, and support facilities.

Each of the above elements, they point out, is important. Time for a needs analysis is particularly vital. Not only does it help educators to gain the needed information to plan the course content, but it also gives them the chance to educate themselves concerning the nature of the workplace. Many education partners may not be aware of the demands on the business world to meet production quotas, keep prices down, maintain inventory, establish various standards, and uphold federal safety regulations. (In fact, many private contractors make a strong effort either to select educators from the business world or to train their instructors in the language and culture of business and industry. The background of their instructors then becomes a selling point in the marketing of their educational product.) In order to gain this understanding, educators need to negotiate at least some access to the job site. Depending on the business, this may include anything from short site visits to a chance to "shadow" workers at every phase of production or service delivery.

Many factors regarding the nature of the program may be discussed tentatively at this stage and formalized after the needs analysis. The Center for Applied Linguistics (1983) suggests the following points be discussed:

- How many people will be in the program?
- What criteria will be used to identify workers eligible for ESL?
- How many learners should be in each group?
- How will learners be assigned to groups?
- How long should the course last?
- How should instruction be scheduled?
- Will the class meet during work hours?
- When should the classes take place?
- Where should the classes be held?
- What policy should be taken toward absences?
- Who should pay for the course?
- Who should pay for materials?

Many educational providers may have certain restrictions concerning class size imposed by funders. Attendance often constitutes a considerable concern and should also be discussed up front. Will students be asked to skip classes when production is down or when there are shortages of personnel on the floor for various reasons? In some cases, this reality is inevitable since few businesses can afford to jeopardize customer satisfaction or production quotas for *any* reason. In other cases, careful planning can avoid such problems by, for example, predicting in advance the seasonal nature of some businesses and scheduling classes accordingly or by making sure that front-line managers–the immediate supervisors of most participants–are fully supportive of the project. The time when the class is held may also be important in this regard.

Generally, courses are held at the end of a work shift for a period of 1 to 2 hours, 2 to 3 times a week. Sometimes they are also held at the beginning of a shift or during lunch time. Classes at the end of the workday appear to be most common. Workers are often tired at this point, and many face concerns regarding how to juggle child care and family responsibilities when they arrive home from work late; however, this seems to have been the most viable arrangement for most programs. Many educators prefer 2-hour class segments since this allows for more time to develop a lesson theme with the class as a whole and to provide attention to individual students (Belfiore & Burnaby, 1995).

Class length and hours should also be negotiated. A review of program documents revealed that programs varied considerably in length: Some were as short as 4 to 6 weeks. Others were as long as 6 months with linkages to continued education after that. For the most part, though, courses were from around 9 to 16 weeks in duration.

A first course can serve as a bridge to additional courses. This modular system allows the program to accomplish a series of discrete, short-term objectives. It may also be easier to motivate learners in short spurts where they can see the results of their efforts. This system has other advantages since at the end point of each cycle the configuration of students in the class can be reorganized, the time the class is held can be rescheduled, and the course objectives reorganized. This short-term training approach is often chosen by management since it is more consistent with other kinds of training offered through its (human) resources departments.

The Needs Analysis Process

Belfiore and Burnaby (1995) suggest that several key interviews should take place, beginning with the key contact persons appointed to the project during the original partnership and with senior personnel. Next, they recommend interviews with the immediate supervisors of potential students before interviewing the workers themselves and, in some cases, with their co-workers. These interviews may be integrated with the other two processes: observations and language assessment (see Figure 5-3). The interview process accomplishes two purposes. First, it provides the planners with access to information about the organization and people involved in the larger communication network, the structure and operation of the workplace, and the language and communication requirements of potential learners. In addition, it offers the planners a chance to meet key people in the organization in order to describe the purpose of the educational program being planned and to gain their support and advice early in the planning process. The relationships that are built at this time may be key to the program's success. In some cases, if the interviewees agree, these conversations can be audiotaped for more careful analysis at a later date. In other cases, a written questionnaire may be sent out in advance or filled out during the face-to-face interviews. Modified focus groups, at which representatives of the target population discuss training needs and issues, have also been used as a tool in the interview process.

Interviews

Interviews with Key Contact Persons

The key contact persons are ideal sources for information about the company and can serve to orient the planners to the workplace. Planners may want to ask about company products

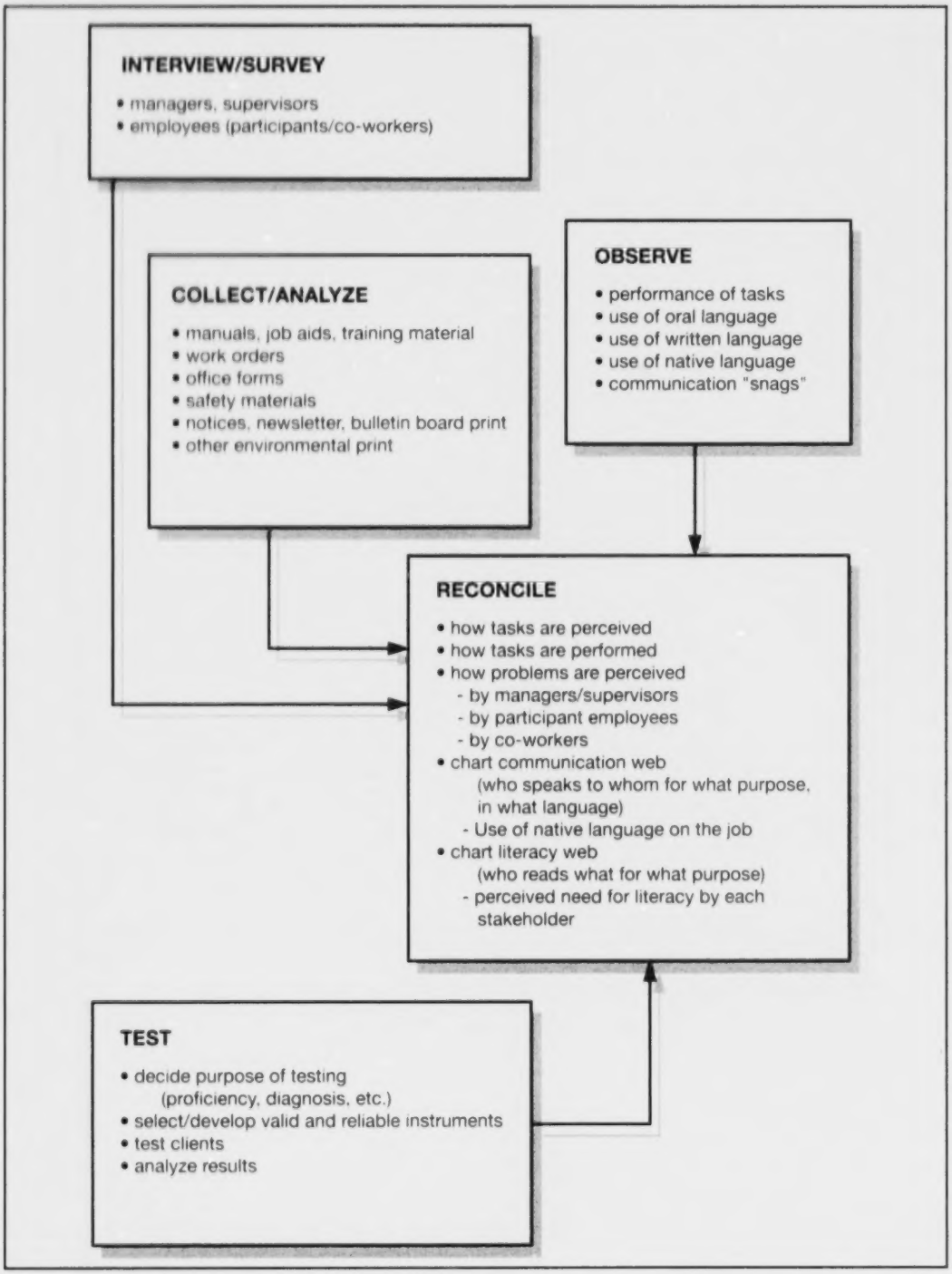
INTERVIEW/SURVEY
• managers, supervisors
• employees (participants/co-workers)
COLLECT/ANALYZE
• manuals, job aids, training material
• work orders
• office forms
• safety materials
• notices, newsletter, bulletin board print
• other environmental print
OBSERVE
• performance of tasks
• use of oral language
• use of written language
• use of native language
• communication "snags"
RECONCILE
• how tasks are perceived
• how tasks are performed
• how problems are perceived
- by managers/supervisors
- by participant employees
- by co-workers
• chart communication web
(who speaks to whom for what purpose, in what language)
- Use of native language on the job
• chart literacy web
(who reads what for what purpose)
- perceived need for literacy by each stakeholder
TEST
• decide purpose of testing
(proficiency, diagnosis, etc.)
• select/develop valid and reliable instruments
• test clients
• analyze results

Figure 5-3 **The Needs Analysis Process**

From Grognet, A.G. (1991, March). *Workplace/Workforce ESL: Trends and Promises.* Presentation at the Annual Meeting of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, New York.

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or services; the structure of the company; the number of departments, employees, and types of jobs; work schedules; company benefits; promotion opportunities and requirements; health and safety instructions and records; and the existence of other in-company training programs. If a union is involved, key contact persons can provide information about the structure of the union, the number of members, the method of communication between members, responsibilities of shop stewards, and other issues. The key contact persons may also be able to provide a list of specific people in the company to be interviewed and can facilitate arranging interviews with senior personnel. They may supply various printed materials helpful to the planners such as maps of the site, advertising materials, employee handouts, historical data about the company, regulations, benefit plans, safety manuals, training manuals, applications, payroll slips, copies of any employee newsletters, job descriptions, menus, collective agreements, and descriptions of how to use various kinds of equipment. Increasingly, companies also have promotional or training videos that may be of use.

Interviews with Senior Personnel

Interviews with senior personnel, especially in a large organization, should be conducted early in the process. Not only will their perception of the long-term mission of the company and of the project at hand provide valuable insights, but planners will also need their help in making sure information about the upcoming needs assessment gets passed down through the appropriate channels.

Interviews with Immediate Supervisors

The next set of interviews is often held with people who have direct daily contact with the learners—immediate supervisors (usually front-line managers) or shop stewards. These meetings are pivotal, since gaining the support of people who directly supervise potential students is often vital to a program's success. However, many experienced workplace organizers have found that supervisors may be resistant to the prospect of an educational program. They may have developed their own methods for coping with communication difficulties on the job and may be unable to see a real need for the course. They may be worried about how classes will affect production or the delivery of services, or they may assume that the identification of a need for classes somehow implies that their department is not performing well. Some supervisors may feel threatened by the prospect of those they supervise receiving training or education that they themselves do not have. It is important at this stage to hear and take into account their concerns and, in particular, to understand *their* job responsibilities as well as focusing on their perception of the needs of the workers.

Interviews with Potential Students

Interviews with potential students are important for gaining general information as well for understanding the way workers see their communication needs and language abilities. At least one or two persons from each job category should be interviewed. Usually this process is separate from the assessment of learners' language proficiency, although, in needs assessments that must be conducted quickly, the two activities are sometimes combined. It may be necessary to conduct these interviews in the native language. Someone at the worksite can usually assist, or programs may use outside interpreters, such as volunteers from community-based organizations.

One tool a number of planners have found helpful is the communication network diagram (Barndt, Belfiore, & Handscombe, 1991; Belfiore & Burnaby, 1995). During the interview, the planner might show individual workers an example of a diagram such as the one in Figure 5-4 and ask

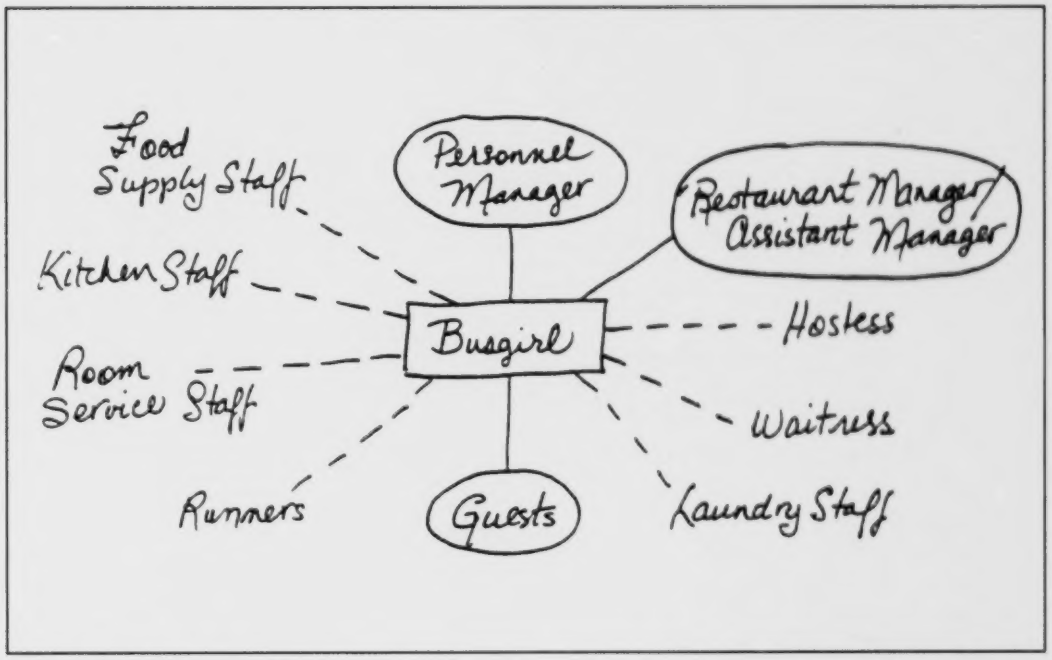

Figure 5-4 **Communication Network Diagram**

Reprinted with permission from Bellore, M.E., & Burnaby, B. (1995). *Teaching English in the Workplace*, p. 43. Toronto, Ontario: Pippin Publishing.

them to fill in a communication network diagram showing all the people they communicate with on the job. This diagram is invaluable on several levels. First, it provides educators with a tool for talking with workers about communication on the job. Second, it provides workers with a simultaneous learning exercise, requiring them to think about their communication patterns on the job. And, last, it helps the planner identify co-workers who should be interviewed.

The Center for Applied Linguistics (1983) suggests a model for a detailed interview with students that can either be conducted in English with higher-level workers, or, if necessary, can be completed with the assistance of an interpreter. The interview covers eight areas including:

1. Personal information on language and cultural background;
2. Job duties;
3. Work setting;
4. Kinds of interaction a worker has with others on the job;
5. Workers' own assessment of when English is needed;
6. Workers' assessment of the difficulty they experience with reading, writing, speaking, and understanding English;
7. Specific communicative events in which English is used; and
8. Workers' assessment of attitudes at the workplace.

Interviews with Co-Workers

The communication network diagram and personal observations will lead to the identification of co-workers who should be interviewed during the needs analysis. Helping co-workers to feel they are contributing to the planning

process may be useful in gaining their support as well. Of particular value may be interviews with non-native speakers of English who have been with the company for some time, since they may have keen observations not only of the language needs of workers but also of the cross-cultural nuances of the workplace.

Observation

A second data collection process described by Grognet (1991) and Belfiore and Burnaby (1995) is observation of the worksite. Generally this first involves a tour of the entire worksite, which is helpful in getting a sense of both the way various departments and people from different job categories interact and of the general layout of the building. As the authors point out, this "grand tour" is also another chance to meet people and explain the purpose of the program.

The observation next moves to specific sites within the business. This stage may take just part of a day or many days depending on the size of the organization and the tasks. Some companies may be more willing than others to allow teachers or planners to spend time at the worksite. Belfiore and Burnaby (1995) describe the case of a teacher who went through the entire process of making a garment in a textile factory. Under the supervision of her future students and the supervisor, she used every machine. This process allowed her to learn the frustrations and fatigue associated with certain jobs as well as to get to know the workers and supervisor better.

Burt and Saccomano (1995) point out that, in order to see the range of skills needed at the workplace, as much observation as possible of *all* workplace-related activities, including union functions and staff meetings, is desirable. For example, in an ESL program for food service employees, teachers or planners may eat in the restaurant or cafeteria where the workers are employed to observe the jobs various workers perform and how they interact with one another and with the customers. They might also sit in on a training given by personnel, or attend a union meeting to learn about issues important to workers.

During observation, the planner should look for the kinds of social language used at work as well as when, where, and with whom it is used; the language used to perform certain tasks and procedures; where the gaps are between the language needed for the job and the language learners are using; where written materials are used; and instances when interpreters are utilized. They should also notice environmental factors such as the noise level at the worksite, the proximity of workers to one another, and the content and readability of signs posted. Although checklists and other graphic organizers can be useful tools for recording these factors, brief descriptions of anecdotal incidences might be needed to illustrate various points and fully describe relationships.

Language Assessment

Generally speaking, some kind of assessment is necessary to determine the listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities of potential participants. This information is essential for planning instruction, for grouping workers into classes, and then, when compared with assessment done after instruction, for measuring learner progress. General language competence and specific skills assessment activities range from informal talks to formal testing. These assessment measures may be mandatory for all employees or voluntary and taken only by those employees who wish to enroll in classes. Assessment may also be company-wide or limited to a specific department.

Many planners suggest carefully considering whether or not to assess using formal testing processes, since, in the past, this procedure has aroused fear and suspicion on the part of those taking the test. Workers may worry that the tests will become part of their permanent record and thus affect their current job or a promotion. If all workers are not taking the test, those who do may wonder why they are being singled out. Even though teachers explain carefully the purpose of the test, it may be difficult to counteract these concerns and therefore may jeopardize the environment of trust and confidentiality the educational program wants to build. There are other issues to consider in planning assesssment as well. Commercially available tests generally measure a formal knowledge of language structures rather than the communicative abilities needed for the workplace. As with vocational ESL programs, some programs use a combination of commercially available and program-developed tests. They may use a commercially available oral proficiency test and math test in conjunction with a program-developed reading and writing test customized to the work site. Other programs may develop all of their own tests.

For students at beginning levels, native language assessments are sometimes used. Rosenblum (1994) recounts how one union-sponsored worker education program for primarily Spanish-speaking immigrant workers first asks students to look at a job-related picture or photo and write in Spanish what they see. If they can do this satisfactorily, they then are given a short job-related reading in Spanish followed by a series of comprehension questions. The ability to answer basic comprehension questions based on a longer newspaper article in Spanish and then a short article in English are also rated. These activities, along with an oral interview with students about their lives, prior work and educational experiences, and learning goals assist teachers in assessing student needs.

In *From the Classroom to the Workplace: Teaching ESL to Adults*, the Center for Applied Linguistics (1983) suggests that structured interviews are an appropriate assessment tool for the workplace context. This text describes simple interviews and literacy tests that can be developed by teachers. Belfiore and Burnaby (1995) suggest a series of activities for language assessment, including asking workers to describe various aspects of their job, such as one of the processes involved in their job, short instructions on how to perform one part of their job, what they do if they have to call in sick, or what they would do if their paycheck is incorrect. If this is too challenging, students can be asked to describe pictures of work-related activities. Beginners may just be asked to write their names and addresses and fill out a simple form (making sure they don't get assistance from someone else while trying to do this). *A Handbook for ESL Literacy* (Bell & Burnaby, 1984) has additional ideas for assessment activities with the most beginning level learners.

Reconciling the Data

Reconciling the data involves looking for problems that seem most common. The planner may find areas of concern expressed by many people, including workers, co-workers, and supervisors. They may want to pay particular attention to areas where there is a mismatch between the perceptions of management and those of workers. Communication network diagrams may again be used at this stage to help identify the sources of communication difficulties. From this analysis, a tentative list of curriculum objectives can then be developed.

Over the years, as many workplace ESL planners have conducted needs analyses at the

workplace, some common core categories of communication that seem to occur across workplaces have been identified. Although most contemporary views of language eschew the possibility of identifying a universal set of skill areas that apply to all contexts, many of the language categories discussed in previous studies can serve as general guides for teachers as they look for patterns through which to analyze the language interactions they see during a needs analysis. For example, the Center for Applied Linguistics (1983) found these key categories useful:

- Language used in routine social interaction: Greetings, farewells, ways of addressing coworkers, working as part of a team;
- Language used for a specific job: Responding to instructions, making requests, helping others, keeping records, following safety regulations;
- Language for flexibility and increased responsibility: Describing the processes of the whole plant, addressing a variety of people, giving messages, carrying messages, writing notes, using the telephone, initiating conversation; and
- Language for inquiring about formal procedures: Questioning about wages, holidays, leave, fringe benefits; using the clinic and credit union; discussing grievances.

Building on the above categories, Grognet (1996) identified a more comprehensive list of topics (see Figure 5–5) as the "backbone" of any workplace ESL curriculum (p. 2). The list includes workplace communication expectations, following directions and instructions, job-specific terminology, crosscultural factors, company organization and culture, and upgrading and training.

Preparing the Report

The format for a report based on a needs analysis varies. In some cases, all that is required is an oral report. More often, however, some kind of written document is produced describing the needs assessment process and making recommendations. It is at this point that a delineation of costs will be offered as well as an estimate of the amount of time needed for curriculum development. Among the topics covered in the report may be acknowledgement and thanks to those who participated, an executive summary of key findings and recommendations, a brief section describing the background of the organization, a description of the needs assessment process, and findings and recommendations. An appendix may include copies of any tools used such as questionnaires and interview guidelines.

Approaches to Curriculum Development

The traditional view of curriculum development has been that it is an activity undertaken by specialists who develop textbooks for teacher use. In education in general this is changing. As educators become more aware of the extent to which each classroom is a unique social context, teachers have come to assume more responsibility for creating curricula, or for adapting pre-existing curricula to meet the needs of their students. In workplace education, where contexts are so varied, there is a nearly universal need for customized curricula. This can place considerable strain on program planners and teachers who must often be needs analysts, administrators, counselors, and classroom teachers as well as curriculum developers (Belfiore & Burnaby, 1995). However, the challenge has created an environment where a great deal of innovation has taken place in recent years. This section briefly describes the curriculum development process and provides sources for planners who are undertaking curriculum development in workplace ESL education. It also highlights some of the many innovative program materials being created within the field.

Workplace Curriculum Topics

1. **Workplace Communication Expectations**
   - greeting co-workers
   - asking questions
   - making "small talk"
   - reporting problems and progress
   - calling in sick or late
   - requesting time off or permission to leave early
   - responding to interruption and criticism
   - making suggestions
   - accepting and declining requests and invitations
   - asking for and giving clarification and verification
   - apologizing
2. **Following Directions and Instructions**
   - identifying listening strategies for directions
   - understanding quality control language
   - understanding words of sequencing
   - giving feedback to directions
   - asking for, giving, and following directions
   - giving and responding to warnings
   - understanding and following worksite rules
   - following safety rules
3. **Job-Specific Terminology**
   - identification of one's job
   - enumeration of the tasks
   - description of the tasks
   - identification and description of tools, equipment, and machinery
   - identification of products and processes
4. **Cross-cultural Factors**
   - food and eating habits
   - personal hygiene, habits, and appearance
   - cultural values of America and the American workplace
   - understanding workplace hierarchies
   - understanding "unwritten rules"
   - recognizing problems and understanding appropriate problem-solving strategies
5. **Company Organization and Culture**
   - management functions
   - union functions
   - personnel policies, procedures, and benefits
   - performance evaluations
   - rewards and recognition
6. **Upgrading and Training**
   - understanding career opportunities
   - understanding the need for training
   - understanding what a "valued" worker is

Figure 5-5 **Workplace Curriculum Topics**

From Grognet, A.G. (1996). *Planning, Implementing, and Evaluating Workplace ESL Programs*, p. 2. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.

The Curriculum Design Process

After the needs analysis is completed, the curriculum design process can begin. Although this process may vary depending on the approach of the program, in most cases the following interrelated activities are included:

1. General objectives are developed based on the needs analysis;
2. These objectives are divided and sequenced into units;
3. Course content, lessons, and activities are planned;
4. Actual materials are developed and field tested; and
5. Evaluation activities are created.

Increasingly in recent years, the curricula are designed in such a way that the course objectives can be discussed, negotiated, and adapted to accommodate the ongoing contributions and immediate needs of learners and sometimes of other partners such as supervisors or employers (Belfiore & Burnaby, 1995; Grognet, 1996; Taggart, 1996).

Developing the General Course Objectives

Generally speaking, writing the general course objectives and sharing them with the various partners involved is an important first step to ensure that everyone agrees on the overall content of the course. After that, more specific tasks can be delineated. The example in Figure 5-6 is based on a task needs assessment developed as part of the *Food and Beverage Industry ESL Workplace Literacy Curriculum for Hotels* by the Arlington Education and Employment Program (REEP) in Arlington, Virginia (Van Duzer, Schaffner, & Seufert-Bosco, 1990). Under each general objective, job skills tasks (competencies) and oral language skills (functions) are identified.

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The curriculum planners estimate that three-fourths of these units can be covered in a 60-hour course. REEP suggests that the first two units, which provide a review of basic literacy and numeracy skills, be covered by everyone. Additional units can then be prioritized based on contact with hotel personnel and on decisions made by teachers and students.

The Center for Applied Linguistics (1983) similarly suggests that the key objectives be written first. These can then be divided into units based on the number of hours for the total course. For example, for a 40-hour course, five units might be initially planned, with seven one-hour lessons and one consolidation or review lesson in each unit. Many educators recommend that language required for social interactions be addressed first, since these kinds of lessons can both teach language skills needed for the workplace and allow for social interaction among students and teachers that will create a warm, interactive climate for learning. Units involving more difficult concepts, such as dealing with company policy or with more problematic content such as expressing dissatisfaction to co-workers and supervisors, may be placed toward the end of the course.

Planning the Course Content

Next, the course content can be written. The content of the course will vary considerably depending on the methodology and overall philosophy of teaching and learning chosen by the planners. Although many teachers do not adhere strictly to one method, there are differing approaches with distinct characteristics. The following paragraphs provide a few examples.

In a course defined by the *functional-context* approach, a sequence of skills may be carefully determined in advance, based directly on tasks that need to be performed at work. The Housekeeping Department curriculum developed by Project EXCEL of the Career Resources Development Center in San Francisco (1993) is one example. Unit 5 is devoted to the objective of "Reporting Problems." The unit begins by asking students to fill in the blanks with five problems they have reported to the housekeeping office. They then practice four typical dialogues between housekeepers and guests who have expressed a problem. Other activities in the unit include matching vocabulary activities associated with reporting problems, filling out maintenance request forms, asking students to write their own problem dialogues, and identifying potential problems with various equipment in a bathroom (based on photographs taken from an actual hotel room). The teacher's role is that of "guide and transmitter of information" (Pahl & Monson, 1992, p. 521). The advantage of this approach is that

From Needs Assessment to Curriculum Design **Box 5F**

Swingline Staple Factory, located in Queens, offers two ESL classes in a large room behind the factory assembly floor. Teachers, who also were curriculum developers, worked alongside Swingline employees on the assembly line, performing the same tasks as their students, observing, and listening to the languages being used. Based on this experience, they developed a draft of learning objectives and sequenced them. They then selected exercises from texts and created materials to include the vocabulary and concepts they had identified. After trying out each unit, they reviewed and rewrote it for the next class. In addition to the draft outlines and units, teachers kept a journal after each class, noting what happened, what worked, and what needed to be changed. Finally, they rewrote all the units and produced *Speaking Swinglish*, an ESL curriculum that can be used by other instructors (Johnson, 1993).

Below is a list of job skills tasks (competencies) and oral language skills (functions) necessary to carry out these tasks. These form the basis of the curriculum. In a 60-hour class, it is possible to cover 6-8 units.

The first two units listed should be covered the first few class sessions. They provide an opportunity to review basic literacy skills—reading, writing, and numeracy. The other units then need to be prioritized by the hotel contact person (general manager, supervisor, liaison), in consultation with the classroom teacher and students, to determine class content. This enables the curriculum to be tailored to meet the hotel's most pressing needs and the employees' goals.

General ESL: Personal Identification
- Identify self
- Ask/answer questions about self
- Request clarification

Read Work Schedules
- Report information
- Ask/answer questions about day/time
- Request schedule change

Provide Initial Service
- Greet guests
- Introduce self
- Take leave
- Follow job instructions
- Ask/answer requests for information

Provide Supplies
- Identify supplies
- Make/answer a request
- Ask for clarification
- Apologize
- Make a suggestion
- Offer assistance

Follow Instructions/Describe Job Tasks
- Identify equipment and supplies
- Follow instructions
- Request clarification
- Give sequence of tasks
- Give instructions

Report Work Completion
- Respond to requests for information
- Respond to praise
- Respond to criticism
- Report progress
- Report completion
- Give explanations

Discuss Performance Evaluation
- Respond to praise
- Respond to criticism
- Identify ratings

Answer the Telephone
- Greet
- Identify self and department
- Ask/answer requests for information
- Clarify information
- Take a message

Report Lateness/Absence
- Identify self on telephone
- State problem/give reason
- Identify body parts/illnesses
- Make a request on telephone
- State intention

Give Directions to Places within the Hotel and Vicinity
- Respond to requests for information
- Provide information about location
- Apologize
- Give directions
- Make a suggestion

Report and Prevent Accidents and Emergencies
- Identify safety signs
- Report accidents
- Warn others
- Make a suggestion

Report Problems/Repairs Needed
- Identify problems
- Report problems
- Request clarification
- Request assistance

Read Paychecks
- Identify terms
- Ask/answer questions
- Ask for assistance
- Report problems

Other:

_____

_____

Figure 5-6 **Task Needs Assessment: Food and Beverage**

From Van Duzer, C., Schaffner, K., & Seufert-Bosco, M. (1990). *REEP Food and Beverage Industry ESL Workplace Curriculum for Hotels*, pp. 5-6. Arlington, VA: Arlington County Public Schools, Arlington Education and Employment Program (REEP).

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each activity is carefully planned so that it can be used by any instructor, even one with relatively little training. In addition, there is a direct link between language taught in the class and language used on the job. Since a series of discrete items are taught, it is also relatively easy to plan pre- and post-tests to measure the material covered by the lessons. The disadvantage with this approach is that curricula may be overly simplistic and may not take into account the complex interactions that occur in real-life situations. There is also little room for workers to discuss why problematic incidents, such as work equipment breaking, may be occurring or to describe how this problem relates to their own daily work.

ESL for Action: Problem Posing at Work (Auerbach & Wallerstein, 1987) is a curriculum based on a *participatory, problem-posing approach*. In this approach, the teacher chooses relevant themes that help students develop critical thinking around problems associated with the workplace, analyze the underlying causes of those problems, and take action to gain more control over their lives. Each unit involves a listening phase (where issues in the community are investigated), a dialogue phase (where issues are codified for discussion), and an action phase (where students develop strategies for making changes). For example, a unit entitled "Making Money" begins with a code in the form of a dialogue between two workers, one of whom believes his paycheck is $10 too short. Questions for discussion about the dialogue are suggested. The questions help students to define the problem, analyze how it happened, discuss what should be done, and reflect on what they would do in a similar situation. Other activities for skills building focus on learning vocabulary related to paychecks, reading pay stubs, calculating pay, and learning about minimum wage laws. Later, students learn language related to reporting a pay problem and discuss or role play what they might do if the issue is not resolved to their satisfaction. In this curriculum, teachers are given general guidelines for material to cover in the lesson; however, it is up to them to pick and chose among the various activities suggested, so preparation time may be considerable. Lessons of this nature also require skillful facilitation abilities on the part of the teacher and strong classroom management skills to balance time between each of the components. Teachers must be able to reflect carefully on their role as a change agent and their responsibilities to their students on many levels.

In other *learner-centered approaches*, the curriculum emerges as the program gets under way, and is jointly planned by teachers and students. Rosenblum (1996) recounts how students in one program decided to organize an oral history project resulting in a book and tapes documenting their work and union experience in the factory. Among the tasks associated with this multi-unit activity were making a list of questions to use to interview co-workers, writing paragraphs on these topics, taping and listing to interviews, discussing issues that came up, and writing paragraphs to introduce the interviews that appear in the book. In another example, an ESL class offered to Mexican and Polish plastics workers (Power, 1992), the teacher asked students to have a picture of themselves taken on the job. The photos were then used to generate sentences describing the work students do on a typical day, and a class story was written with a section on each student.

To use learner-centered this approaches, teachers must have strong facilitation and classroom management skills. They must find ways to balance and integrate activities proposed by learners with the basic skills the students need to develop and the objectives the program sponsors may like to see covered.

Regardless of the approach, most good curricula integrate the teaching of language functions, grammatical structures, an organized practice of oral communication skills, vocabulary, various kinds of reading and writing tasks necessary for the job, and sometimes basic math. They move from teacher-directed activities to skills practice to more student-directed activities to concepts, ideas, and relationships.

Materials and Techniques

No matter what approach the curriculum takes, classroom practices should be varied and interesting. Learners know the difference between classroom activities that are meaningful (seek out information) and activities that are busy work (the answer is already known). A few techniques that have proven useful make use of photographs, tape-recorded conversations and videotapes, printed materials, photostories, oral

A Whole Language Approach — Box 5G

In 1982, Ford Motor Company and the United Auto Workers set up a Skills Enhancement Program under which each Ford plant could develop a basic skills and ESL program suited to its needs. The Ypsilanti plant linked up with Eastern Michigan University to form The Academy. This program uses whole language instructional principles to develop its basic skills and ESL program at the automobile manufacturing plant. The program focuses on having students read whole texts related to various themes and writing about the topics under discussion. The written work of ESL students then becomes the topic for directed workshops in various language and communication skills. Employees themselves are encouraged to participate in the design of the program. This approach develops not only communication skills but also enhances team participation skills, critical thinking, and other "higher order" skills that more and more workers will need as the company moves into the future (Business Council for Effective Literacy, July 1988, No. 16).

Competencies to Target a Specific Need — Box 5H

A good example of an effective competency-based curriculum is the *Convenience Store Workplace Literacy Curriculum*. Developed for ESL classes offered by the Southland Corporation's 7-Eleven Food Stores through a national workplace literacy grant, this curriculum contains four units. Each unit includes competencies as well as suggested activities for warmup and review, presentation, practice, evaluation, and application of the materials. The first unit, "Introducing Ourselves and Our Worksite," encourages employees from different stores to learn to work as a team to assess their language and literacy needs. The four additional units focus on responding to customer concerns and complaints, handling and preventing robbery and shoplifting, transacting alcohol-related sales, and responding to customers' requests. Competencies are organized in clusters so teachers can "mix and match" them to meet individual classroom needs, and the curriculum uses such interactive activities as communication network mapping, critical incidents, and role playing to address both language and cultural worksite issues (Van Duzer & Mansoor, 1993).

Involving Students in Curriculum Development — Box 5I

The Global Factory, produced through the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union in New York City is based on a workshop held in 1991 by two groups of teachers and students. The workshop explored the economic trend whereby transnational corporations send production and assembly operations to the Third World in search of cheaper labor, and it began a collaborative ESL curriculum development process among teachers, students, and union staff (Lamar & Schnee, 1993).

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stories and language experience stories, role plays, questionnaires, charts, and diagrams.

Photographs

Regardless of teaching approach, teachers may use a number of techniques effectively in a workplace ESL classroom. Belfiore and Burnaby (1995) present a good repertoire of techniques and source materials. Photographs can be used for a variety of purposes, including identifying the steps in the production process, learning vocabulary, and identifying problems on the job. They can be used as tools to integrate listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities with concrete language for the workplace and with analysis of problems and processes.

Tape-recorded conversations and videotapes

The real language used in the workplace is a good source for material to use in class. (Permission, of course, must be received to tape or videotape workers, and those workers involved should also give their consent). Such tapes can be used for practice in listening for general comprehension and for specific information. Videotapes may reveal important cross-cultural issues that can be discussed. Belfiore and Burnaby (1995) suggest other ways teachers can guide discussions of tapes, such as focusing on areas where there is a communication breakdown; listening for requests for clarification, repetition, and paraphrasing; and noting changes in the speaker's tone of voice that might indicate how the communication is being perceived. If it is not possible to tape authentic conversations, they suggest that learners and their co-workers create role plays that simulate realistic conversations. Other programs have used commercial videos as source materials for language lessons.

Printed materials

Printed materials are another good resource for the classroom. Many of those materials identified earlier during the needs assessment process, such as work schedules, operating instructions posted on machines, and safety notices, can be adapted for use in the classroom both as topics for oral discussion and as tools for practicing reading and writing. Tips found in this chapter for adapting workplace materials may be used in this process. Although materials may need to be adapted to make them easier for students to understand, particularly at the beginning levels, students may be able to read material at a fairly difficult level if it has meaning and impact on their lives. In New York, Johnson (1993) recounts how students at a knitting factory demonstrated a keen interest in reading their own union contract and were able to work their way slowly through the document with the help of teacher-developed exercises to assist them in learning vocabulary and identifying significant information in the text. And in Washington DC, a program for food and beverage workers used sections of their union contract *and* parts of their personnel manual as assessment tools and classroom practice in reading (Alamprese & Kay, 1994).

Photostories

Photostories are materials produced by learners. Often they involve a process of 1) discussing a possible story that could be captured through photographs; 2) role-playing the story and taking pictures to depict various sequences; 3) writing a script or captions to go with the each picture; and 4) organizing the materials into a publishable format. Developing photostories can be a good way to build community among students. Various kinds of teacher-developed activities can also be used to discuss themes or practice language.

Oral stories and language experience stories

Stories of students' lives or work experiences can be a rich source of material for the teacher. These may be collected by audiotaping stories as students tell them. With beginning students, a language experience approach can be used both to generate stories and to teach basic literacy skills. In a language experience approach, the student tells a simple story and a teacher or other helper writes it down exactly as it is told. This text then becomes a source of reading material for the student, with the teacher developing various kinds of literacy activities using the text, such as scrambled word exercises, cloze lessons, phonics activities, and others.

Role plays

Role plays are a mainstay of many workplace literacy programs. These may include prescripted dialogues involving oral communication in the workplace or role plays in which students play themselves. Many educators prefer these unscripted role plays since scripted dialogues often cannot predict the flow and unpredictable nature of real language. (Beginners, however, may need models to practice at first.) Role plays not only allow students to practice communicative skills, but they also can be a valuable tool to reveal problematic and multiple-sided issues and to give students skills and strategies for influencing their environment. The El Paso Community College Pro-

Videotapes for Classroom Use — Box 5J

Several videotapes produced as classroom tools have been made available by programs. Here are just a few:

The Cutting Edge Series is a series of 60 instructional videotapes and accompanying modules that focus on various workplace themes. The materials were developed as part of a National Workplace Literacy Grant Program partnership between Levi Strauss & Company and El Paso Community College. A basic skills curriculum with videotapes is currently being prepared. It focuses on developing reading, writing, and math skills (El Paso Community College, 1993a; 1993b).

Working in the United States was developed by the Center for Applied Linguistics. Originally designed to assist in orienting refugees to the American workplace, these videotapes focus on typical workdays of entry-level workers in a restaurant, a hotel, a hospital, and a factory. Specific language functions such as stating a task, reading codes, sorting and weighing, and following multiple directions are addressed in the tapes (Center for Applied Linguistics, 1987).

You're Hired! and *Climbing the Ladder* make up a series of two video instructional programs along with accompanying instructional materials designed to help ESL students learn 1) oral competencies employers identify as essential for second language employees, 2) tips for working with employers, and 3) a variety of crosscultural information. Produced in close collaboration with students at North Seattle Community College, these tapes present numerous and realistic vignettes of situations many students encounter on the job as well as language practice activities (North Seattle Community College, 1989).

Using Writing to Explore Themes — Box 5K

The International Ladies' Garment Workers Union *Worker-Family Education Program Curriculum Guide* presents a process whereby ESL students in the workplace programs write and publish personal writings including short stories, life histories, personal opinions, and reports. These materials, shared among sites around the city, build a sense of pride and solidarity among students in this large program (Freeman & LaMar, 1989).

Role Plays into Video — Box 5L

Workbook for WorkPlays: You and Your Rights on the Job, by Lenore Balliro, is a videotape accompanied by a workbook developed as part of a workplace ESL project at Southeastern Massachusetts University. The curriculum consists of five units: 1) safety and health, 2) workers' compensation, 3) discrimination, 4) unions, and 5) workplace rights. In each unit, workplace issues are represented in the form of two or three short skits. The skits are transcribed in the workbook, along with a list of preparatory exercises, structured language activities, and guided questions for reflection on the issues. The materials, designed for use with Portuguese-speaking factory workers, can be used to supplement existing curricula and include a guide for how to use the tapes (Balliro, 1988).

Using Role Plays to Address Difficult Issues — Box 5M

A Curriculum Packet About Immigration Related Job Discrimination, produced by the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition, uses role plays and critical incidents to help students explore how to deal with this important issue. Discussion guides help teachers prepare for classroom activities (Nash & Wright, 1991).

Collaborative Learning Processes — Box 5N

Mademoiselle Garment Factory, located in an impoverished part of Brooklyn, is a mid-sized garment knitting factory that produces sweaters for companies such as Liz Claiborne. Through the Consortium for Worker Education, they conducted two ESL classes on site. In one of their activities, students learned about the concept of mapping by creating a map of one room of their house. They then worked collaboratively to create workplace maps, each with a particular emphasis. For example, one set of maps focused on health and safety risks of various machines on the knitting factory floor. Another represented the organization of the factory. Another began with each worker at his or her work station and expanded outward. Students learned vocabulary, organization, and categorizing skills in completing the exercise. In another exercise, students created dialogues around the theme of layoffs, an all too familiar circumstance at the factory (Johnson, 1993).

gram uses a dynamic curriculum development process. Drawing from their perceptions of difficulties in communication on the job, students generate topics for the curriculum. Then, using language and strategies learned in class, the students are videotaped as they role play solutions to workplace communication problems (Taggart, 1996).

Questionnaires, charts, and diagrams. Many kinds of charts and diagrams where students must supply missing information have been used successfully in workplace ESL programs. These tools can generate activities where students interview one another in class. Charts and diagrams can teach organizational and categorizing skills as well how to implement a simple research process. After the information is collected, students can look for results. For example, students might collect and analyze the previous work experiences of members of the class and compare notes.

Evaluating Program Effectiveness

Within the field of general workplace education, there remain continuing concerns regarding how to measure program effectiveness. Mark Kutner of Pelavin Associates points out that "it is not readily apparent what has been learned about the impact of the National Workplace Literacy Programs on either participating employers or participating learners. The existing program evaluations rely primarily on self-reported data rather than empirical or quantitative research. A more rigorous evaluation of projects would be of unquestionable value" (Kutner, Sherman, Webb, & Fisher, 1991, p. 50). In 1994, the U.S. Department of Education funded a national evaluation of the programs. However, the findings of that evaluation are not likely to be published before 1998.

Few general resource materials exist that are specifically directed toward evaluating workplace ESL programs, although Belfiore and Burnaby (1995) provide a few good tools for the final assessment of learner progress, based on self-assessment and assessments by supervisors. There are a number of final evaluation reports written by programs themselves or conducted by external evaluators that provide much useful information, many produced as part of the National Workplace Literacy Programs. One of the most outstanding of these is the Federal Workplace Literacy Project report, developed by the Arlington Education and Employment Program (REEP) in Arlington, Virginia. The project has developed a model for linking project goals and outcomes. Data is collected and reported on retention rates, attendance, improvement in basic skills based on the BEST, learner self-evaluations, supervisor ratings, and other progress reports. For the project, REEP developed an evaluation framework (see Figure 5-7) for determining what kinds of information each of the major stakeholders in the project needed.

Progress reports take the form of competency checklists that are completed for each class. Using these tools, teachers assess all students according to their ability to perform each language and basic skills task. Self-evaluation forms ask students to measure their own changes in their ability to communicate on the job. Supervisor rating forms help to determine the projects' impact on productivity, self-esteem, communication, safety, and attendance at work.

The Career Resources Development Center (1992) in San Francisco has developed a set of pre- and post-tests based on their own curriculum models, various worker and supervisor productivity-assessment checklists, and a process for asking workers to evaluate program effectiveness. A third program, the Massachusetts Workplace

WHO NEEDS TO KNOW?	WHAT	INSTRUMENT	WHEN
Learners	• Program Goals	• Outreach Materials	Before Instruction
	• Proficiency Levels	• Pre-test Data	Before
	• Progress	• Progress Reports • Self Evaluation	During
	• Skill Achievement	• Progress Report • Self Evaluation	After
	• Learner Goal Achievement	• IEP	After
Teachers	• Program Goals	• Orientation Materials	Before
	• Employer Goals	• Supervisor Priority for Competencies • Informal Conferences	Before During
	• Employee Goals	• IEP	Before & During
	• Learner Pre-tests	• Best Test or Appropriate Pre-test	Before
	• Learner Progress	• Progress Reports • Supervisor Ratings • Post-tests	During & After After
Employers	• Program Goals	• Orientation Materials	Before
	• Contextualized Curriculum	• Course Outline	Before & During
	• Impact on Workplace	• Supervisor Ratings, Overall Class Statistics for Retention, Attendance, Progress	After
Other Stakeholder Administrators FEDS, Project Partners, External Evaluator, the Public	• Program Goals	• Proposal	Before
	• Impact on Employees	• Statistical Data on Progress	During & After
	• Impact on Workplace	• Data from Supervisors	Before, during & after

Figure 5-7 **Evaluation Framework**

From Mansoor, I. (1993). *REEP Federal Workplace Literacy Project, March 1, 1991–February 28, 1993*, p. 36. Arlington, VA: Arlington County Public Schools.

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Literacy Initiative, has extensively explored the issues of determining program quality as well (Sperazi, Jurmo, & Rosen, 1991).

Reports by external evaluators of workplace ESL programs also exist. Three good examples include Wrigley's *Outside Evaluation Report for the Arlington Federal Workplace Literacy Project* (1993), Hemphill's *Workplace ESL Literacy in Diverse Small Business Contexts: Final Evaluation Report on Project EXCEL* (1992), and Alamprese and Kay's *Literacy on the Cafeteria Line: Evaluation of the Skills Enhancement Training Program* (1994). Although the majority of the participants in the program evaluated by Alamprese and Kay were native speakers, ESL learners were also served, and the tools and processes described are applicable to all adult learners.

Conclusion

Workplace ESL education is becoming a vital aspect of the provision of adult ESL educational services. For many reasons, it offers great potential for the development of innovations within the field. It also presents many questions for educators as they consider their roles in this new setting. Workplace ESL educators are striving to be much more than simply "delivery-persons bringing packages of learning to designated 'target' groups" (Sauvé, 1995, p. 16). Many educators are struggling to find creative ways to place ESL education within the broader communicative context of the workplace as a whole. As yet, only a small number of businesses currently offer ESL and basic skills instruction at the workplace. Many still lack confidence in the ability of training to improve employees' skills or fail to see the economic value of such an investment. Others find alternate ways of dealing with language deficiencies, such as reorganizing job tasks to minimize the need for English proficiency or hiring supervisors who speak the native language of the workers (Burt, 1995). It is hoped that this will change as the results of effective programs, such as the ones described in this chapter, are disseminated.

Chapter Six

Meeting the Need: What Will It Take?

Today, more than ever, funding for limited English proficient students is a controversial and politically charged issue. The needs of immigrants compete with those of so many other disadvantaged groups. Other national priorities such as reducing the federal deficit, dealing with growing crime, and problems with the health care system often eclipse educational concerns. Yet, most agree that, without a fresh approach to educating the future workforce, the nation's most fundamental priority—a strong economy—will be jeopardized. Educating immigrants, who will soon represent nearly one in three of all new entrants to the workforce, can no longer be overlooked.

This last chapter will briefly summarize the central findings of this paper. Then, based on those findings, it will suggest ten interrelated steps that states and localities can take to ensure that, whatever new system is developed in the coming years to meet the employment-related training needs of adults, limited English proficient adults are included in the planning and service delivery process.

Immigrant Numbers, Education, and Employment: A Summary

High Rate of Immigration

Over 1.1 million immigrants and refugees enter this country each year: 700,000 enter as lawful permanent residents and 100,000 to 150,000 as legal refugees. More than 200,000 undocumented immigrants enter the United States each year as well. Immigrants and refugees represent one third of the nation's net growth (National Immigration Forum, 1994).

Laissez-Fare Immigration Polices

At the same time, the federal government has taken an increasingly laissez-faire approach to domestic immigration policy. No comprehensive federal program exists to support the resettlement of immigrants.

Inadequate Financial Support

Financial support for federal education programs for immigrant adults has been reduced even though the population is growing. The burden of providing health care, education, jobs, and other services has fallen on the states and on a few highly impacted localities.

High Number of Immigrants in the Workforce

Most immigrants come to the United States in their twenties—at prime working age. Since the overall working-age population is getting smaller, immigrants will represent a larger and larger portion of new entrants to the workforce in the coming years. Soon, one in every three new entrants to the workforce will be an immigrant. In highly impacted cities, the proportions will be much higher.

Diverse Educational Backgrounds

Immigrants come with diverse educational backgrounds. About one quarter come with advanced degrees and highly developed work-related qualifications. However, another third or more of all immigrants enter this country having received less than a ninth-grade education in their home countries.

Need for English Language Instruction

To succeed in the workplace, immigrants need language and work-related education. Immigrants who do not learn to speak English, on the average, earn only half as much as those who become proficient in English. Currently, English language instruction is being provided to only a small percentage (perhaps 1 to 2 million) of the 12 to 14 million adults who are limited English proficient.

Need for Employment-Related Training

Even fewer opportunities are available for immigrants to obtain vocational training. Most must acquire high levels of English proficiency *before* they are able to pass English language entrance tests that would allow them to enter most vocational training programs. Although in most cases hard data does not exist, it appears that as few as 2% to 3% of those enrolled in many federally funded vocational programs are limited English proficient adults, *even though* federal mandates state that individuals should not be denied access to services based on limited English proficiency.

Need for Strong Workplace Communication Skills

Today, new workers need strong communication skills and the ability to read, write, and compute as the United States moves to a service economy, as workplaces become restructured, and as the prevalence of technology increases. To succeed even in entry-level jobs, immigrants require specialized education.

Need to Disseminate What Works

Many innovative models to provide vocational English as a second language, vocational, and workplace education currently exist. But programs have been hampered by a lack of funds to develop their program designs, create assessment tools, and organize effective ways to demonstrate the outcomes of participation.

What States and Localities Can Do: Ten Steps

States and localities can play a crucial role in ensuring that the employment-related needs of adult immigrants are taken into account in the planning and delivery of future education services. The following is a discussion of 10 steps (presented in Figure 6-1) that can be used to achieve this goal.

Building Commitment for ESL Issues

The existing fragmentation of adult ESL and vocational education has been well documented in recent years. (See Chisman, Wrigley, & Ewen, 1993; Grognet, 1994; U.S. Congress, Office of Technology and Assessment, 1993; Wrigley & Ewen, 1995.) Students seeking services encounter a web of disconnected, often overlapping programs. Recent trends indicate a strong interest in overcoming this problem on both a federal and state level. Funds from many existing programs may be merged and awarded to states on a block grant basis. State level coalitions and planning bodies will then be needed to coordinate services. At this critical juncture, it is especially important that persons representing the interests of limited English proficient adults be included as part of these planning groups so that the needs of this population can be considered from the beginning. As has been seen in this report, the presence of one or more strong advocates supporting and furthering the needs of limited English proficient adults has often been central to the development of clear, non-exclusionary policies and the institutionalization of services in community colleges, vocational schools, and community-based education. Those persons must be encouraged to take leadership roles as restructuring takes place.

Gathering Data on the Needs of Limited English Proficient Adults

In program after program, no hard data is collected concerning the participation rates of limited English proficient adults in existing programs. There are no reporting requirements and there are often disincentives for breaking down data into participation groups. Planners need to collect data on the characteristics of the local and state immigrant community and keep abreast of demographic changes through census reports, public school records, welfare, unemployment and labor statistics. Data concerning the socioeconomic and educational levels of immigrants and refugees, their English language proficiency, and their cultural backgrounds are vital to deciding which potential areas to target. This information also needs to be examined in light of solid evidence concerning local labor market needs so that the interests of business and the needs of immigrant workers can be intersected.

Getting Business Involved

Business needs to take a more active role in helping plan vocational and workplace training efforts. The most successful vocational training programs appear to be those that have established strong links with industry by including business and labor leaders on advisory panels, making sure the kinds of training offered are consistent with business needs, training workers on equipment currently used by industry, and hiring instructors with recent experience in the private sector. Businesses already offering workplace ESL programs need to be solicited to help promote the benefits of on-site instruction and to work with educators in developing better ways of demonstrating to others the outcomes of instruction. Businesses not involved in workplace education need more information about the costs and benefits.

Providing Incentives for Creating Well-Articulated Service Delivery

One potential barrier to participation of which planners have become increasingly aware is the lack of transition for learners between one agency and another. ESL students from adult schools rarely make the transition to community colleges or vocational schools. Often there is a gap between the qualifications of students who graduate from the highest level in adult schools and the entry requirements for beginning-level courses in vocational programs or institutions of higher education. In addition, adult educators often lack information about how to help students enroll in further education. Several innovative approaches to resolve these problems are being developed, such as bridging classes that provide a transition between ESL and vocational education, education fairs that give adult students exposure to programs that exist in community colleges and vocational schools, and efforts to educate instructors and counselors. These promising approaches need to be further studied and the results disseminated. Models need to be found to build such transitions into the new restructuring plans to be developed in the coming years.

Coordinating Placement and Assessment Indicators

Few adult ESL and vocational educators are satisfied with the existing choices of placement and assessment indicators. Many commercially available tests widely in use are inappropriate for use with limited English proficient adults but continue to be promoted because acceptable alternatives are not available. Various alternative assessment approaches are proving useful in the classroom but have not reached the stage where they can be used to meet program accountability requirements. Within the field of workplace education, good tools are needed to ascertain the outcomes of instruction. Larger

sources of funding are needed to develop better assessment tools. A key challenge is the development of assessment frameworks that are general enough to allow for comparisons between programs, yet have the flexibility to respond to the variety of contexts that exist in the field. State and local planning boards can be encouraged to assist the field by promoting the development of assessment tools that can be field tested across multiple sites, and states need to develop content and performance standards for LEP students.

Developing Concurrent Models of ESL and Vocational Training

Too often even those students with well-defined career goals spend semester after semester in general ESL classes, often becoming discouraged and dropping out before ever getting a chance to enter vocational training. This system wastes human potential and is not cost-effective. Approaches exist for providing concurrent vocationally related English-as-a-second-language and vocational training. Not only do these programs get adults out of the classroom and into higher paying jobs sooner, but research indicates that content-based ESL instruction, such as that which accompanies vocational training, simply takes better advantage of ideal language learning contexts. Some of the most effective programs, such as those offered by the Center for Employment Training in San Jose, California, do not require *any* entrance requirements. They simply provide strong incentives to learn and classes geared to actual labor-market needs. Students stay in the program long enough to get the intensive language and vocational training they need to secure good jobs. These programs, it has been found, can more than pay for themselves as workers with better jobs contribute more to the economy. Better ways need to be found to weed out those wasteful short-term programs that, by providing less than enough training, leave adults without marketable skills. Innovative approaches such as those outlined in Chapter 4 need to be shared and promoted.

Breaking Down Barriers to Accessing Services

One of the most startling facts uncovered by this report is the nearly universal way in which limited English proficient adults are denied services by being unable to pass English-language entrance tests. There exist no strong data to demonstrate the link between the ability to achieve a certain score on the tests and ability to succeed in vocational training. In fact, research has shown that immigrants often demonstrate much better language abilities in contextualized, face-to-face situations (such as on the job) than on decontextualized academic written tests. Moreover, many employers point out that academic-type vocational instruction is not what most workers need and that vocational education should take a more hands-on approach. Both of these facts bring into question the appropriateness of existing entrance requirements. In addition to the fact that such tests may not make sense, they also discriminate against language-minority students. Civil rights legislation indicates that no one should be denied services based on national origin or language proficiency. Yet, this is consistently the rule in program after program throughout the country. Students either cannot get into programs or cannot receive financial aid because they are not deemed "able to benefit" from vocational training. Other barriers also exist. Recruitment practices need to be specially targeted to limited English proficient students. Support services such as counseling, financial aid assistance, bilingual tutoring, and job placement services need to be appropriate to their needs. In addition, educators need to develop better multicultural awareness of the subtle ways in which discrimination may exist within institutions.

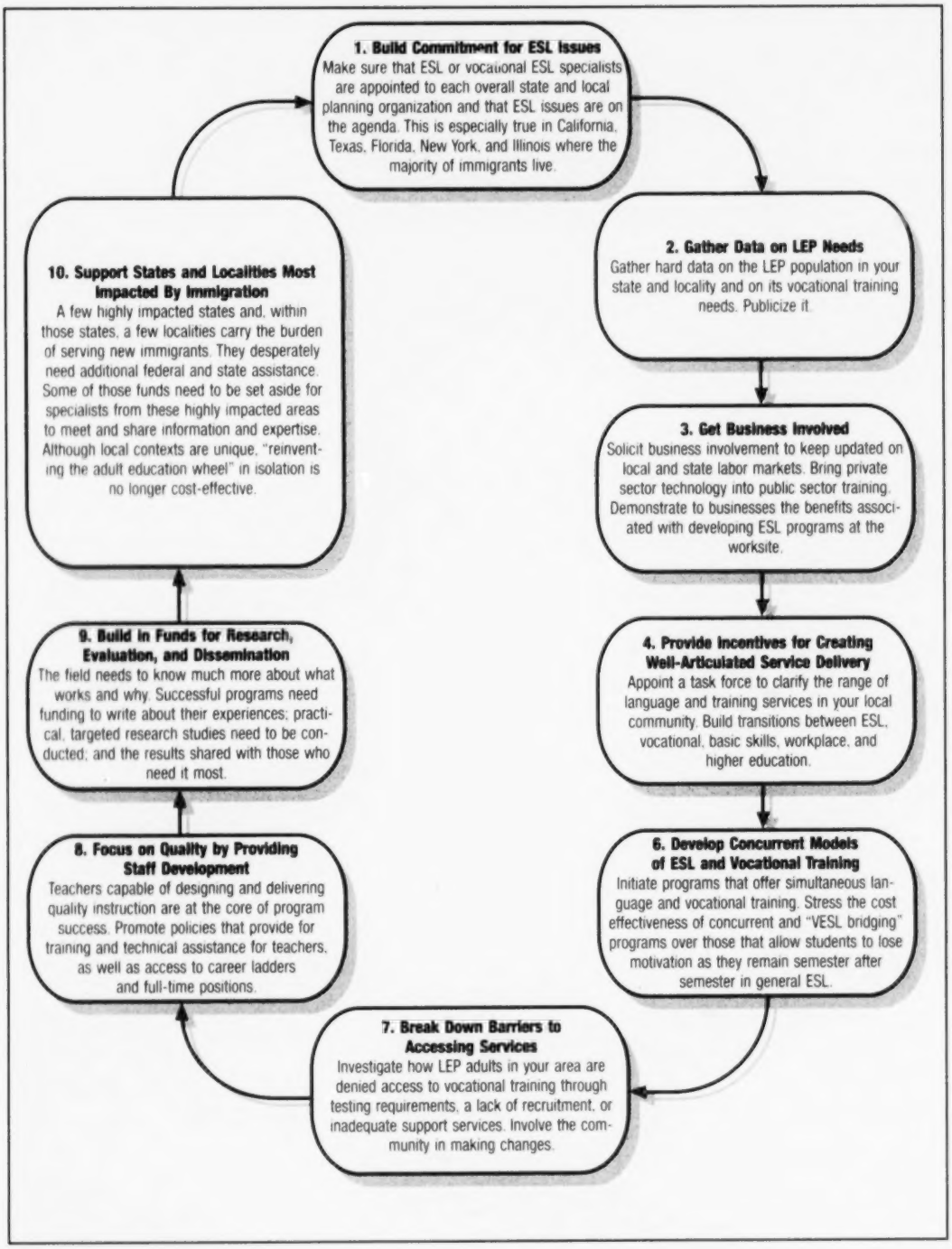
1. Build Commitment for ESL Issues
Make sure that ESL or vocational ESL specialists are appointed to each overall state and local planning organization and that ESL issues are on the agenda. This is especially true in California, Texas, Florida, New York, and Illinois where the majority of immigrants live.
2. Gather Data on LEP Needs
Gather hard data on the LEP population in your state and locality and on its vocational training needs. Publicize it.
3. Get Business Involved
Solicit business involvement to keep updated on local and state labor markets. Bring private sector technology into public sector training. Demonstrate to businesses the benefits associated with developing ESL programs at the worksite.
4. Provide Incentives for Creating Well-Articulated Service Delivery
Appoint a task force to clarify the range of language and training services in your local community. Build transitions between ESL, vocational, basic skills, workplace, and higher education.
6. Develop Concurrent Models of ESL and Vocational Training
Initiate programs that offer simultaneous language and vocational training. Stress the cost effectiveness of concurrent and "VESL bridging" programs over those that allow students to lose motivation as they remain semester after semester in general ESL.
7. Break Down Barriers to Accessing Services
Investigate how LEP adults in your area are denied access to vocational training through testing requirements, a lack of recruitment, or inadequate support services. Involve the community in making changes.
8. Focus on Quality by Providing Staff Development
Teachers capable of designing and delivering quality instruction are at the core of program success. Promote policies that provide for training and technical assistance for teachers, as well as access to career ladders and full-time positions.
9. Build in Funds for Research, Evaluation, and Dissemination
The field needs to know much more about what works and why. Successful programs need funding to write about their experiences; practical, targeted research studies need to be conducted; and the results shared with those who need it most.
10. Support States and Localities Most Impacted By Immigration
A few highly impacted states and, within those states, a few localities carry the burden of serving new immigrants. They desperately need additional federal and state assistance. Some of those funds need to be set aside for specialists from these highly impacted areas to meet and share information and expertise. Although local contexts are unique, "reinventing the adult education wheel" in isolation is no longer cost-effective.

Figure 6-1 **What States and Localities Can Do: Ten Steps**

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Focusing on Quality by Providing Staff Development

Currently, less than one in four of all ESL instructors works in the field full time. Many paid staff continue to be elementary and high school teachers with little specialized training in adult education, in spite of the fact that becoming a vocational ESL instructor or workplace ESL educator is challenging. One of the key precursors to improving the quality of instruction in vocational ESL education is to build capacity among adult ESL educators. Methods need to be found to provide full-time employment opportunities and long-term career paths. Incentives need to be provided to bring people with experience from the business community into the educational field. In addition, bilingual teachers and paraprofessionals play a vital role. Members of linguistic-minority communities must be encouraged to enter educational fields.

Building in Funds for Research, Evaluation, and Dissemination

Research directly related to the language, workplace, and vocational training needs of limited English proficient adults has been virtually nonexistent. Even modest studies could be of significant use to the field. For example, ethnographic research is needed to understand better the linguistic and cultural demands of workplace settings; studies of the relationship between language, literacy, and job performance need to be conducted; the effectiveness of various models of vocational and workplace education need to be examined; and more needs to be known about the role the native language can and should play in instruction. In addition, funds need to be found for experienced practitioners to write about and share their successes so that replicable models can be created.

Supporting States and Localities Most Impacted By Immigration

Statistics show that only a few states are highly impacted by immigration. Eighty percent of all immigrants live in just six states (California, Texas, Florida, New York, Illinois, New Jersey), and within those states, a few key cities are most impacted. In fact, the vast majority of immigrants live in urban areas. In 1990, 93% of all immigrants lived in cities, compared to 73% of native-born Americans (National Immigration Forum, 1994). The well-being and economic growth of some major cities—New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Miami, Houston, and others—will depend very much on the vitality and productivity of the immigrant populations within those localities. Yet, although immigrants contribute significantly to the economy on a federal level in terms of income taxes, these funds are not returned to the localities in equal proportion. As a result, many key cities feel overburdened by their immigrant populations. Efforts need to be found to improve this situation on several fronts. First of all, special targeted funds for education (and other services) need to be channeled to these areas. In addition, states and localities with large immigrant populations need to find ways to learn from one another. While each state's context is different, there are many common needs and concerns. Even limited opportunities to allow vocational ESL and workplace educators in these areas to meet together to plan and share common concerns would be of value. To make the best use of limited funds, collaboration for program improvement is needed.

Sink or Swim?

In the old days, new immigrants were left to sink or swim. Few programs existed to help them learn English or acquire a trade. Immigrants entered the sweat shops of the manufacturing era or worked as laborers on farms. They earned their living through long hours and often backbreaking physical labor. The old adage was that it was their children and their children's children who would achieve the American dream. They made the sacrifice for their suceeding generations. Many of these older immigrants are the parents, grandparents, or great-grandparents of today's successful, integrated, productive adults.

But today is a different day. The manufacturing era is gone and the age of information is here. Most jobs exist in the service sector where the need for strong communication skills and literacy is much greater than before. In the manufacturing sector, new technologies and restructuring of the workplace mean workers must be able to work in teams and adjust to changing realities every day. It is no longer possible to sit mute behind a machine and get by in the work world. The sink-or-swim approach to integrating immigrant workers into society is no longer viable. There is no time to wait until the next generation. The energy, ambition, and risk-taking spirit of *this* generation of immigrants needs to be tapped to keep the nation strong and united.

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PAIE

Project in Adult Immigrant Education

The Project in Adult Immigrant Education (PAIE) focuses on issues in workplace and vocational instruction for adult immigrants and out-of-school youth.

It produces publications and provides technical assistance and training for workplace and vocational ESL educators.

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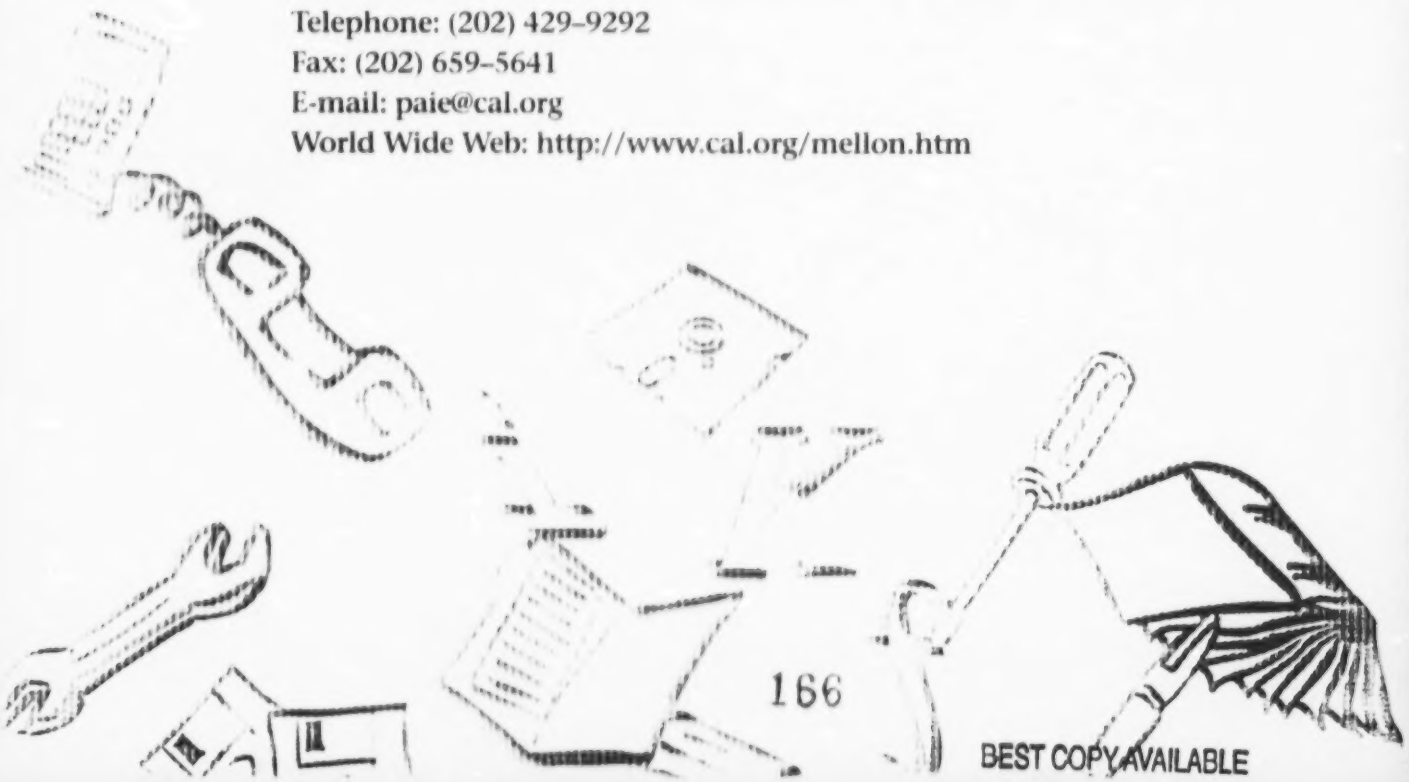

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